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THE HISTORICAL BASES OF RELIGIONS;
PRIMITIVE BABYLONIAN AND JEWISH

BRITTLE PAPER

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HIRAM CHELLIS BROWN



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HISTORICAL BASES OF RELIGIONS

PRIMITIVE, BABYLONIAN, AND JEWISH

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THE HISTORICAL BASES OF RELIGIONS

PRIMITIVE, BABYLONIAN

AND JEWISH

BY

HIRAM CHELLIS BROWN



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BOSTON

1906

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University School

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HIRAM CHELLIS BROWN.

PREFACE

THERE are, no doubt, many people who, should they chance to read the following pages, will ask what useful purpose has been served even if all the conclusions arrived at are just and true. The feeling with many will be that anything that would unsettle the traditional basis upon which the religion of our fathers has seemed to rest, would be a blow aimed at the dearest hopes, the most precious inheritance that has been bequeathed mankind. To such I want to say that, destructive as the views herewith presented may appear to be, I believe them to be warranted by the clearer vision, the broader outlook gained by the higher, firmer ground that modern research has placed beneath our feet. There is no truth that is not useful, and no error that should not be exposed, and there can be no greater error than to suppose that the well-being of humanity hangs upon the perpetuation of any system, either of philosophy or religion, only so far as that system

can square itself with living realities and perform a work that shall improve human conditions. Beliefs concerning God and a future life based upon impossible history and uncertain tradition are not the essentials to this work, and in so far as theology and dogma have absorbed the vital forces of humanity, they have been a drag upon the wheels of progress, — hindrances that have interposed to check the advance of every kind of achievement looking toward the moral and material development of the race.

The life of religion is sustained by hope and expectation of benefits to be derived from divine sources. Originally these benefits were of a temporal nature, but gradually, with the observation that virtue often suffered defeat while vice and crime were successful, the hopes of justice and reward for well-doing were transferred to a future life.

Cosmic forces and the inexorable methods of their operation contain the only reliable hint of what we have dignified with the name of God, while the question of a future life, for a large percentage of mankind, must await the findings of scientific research. We admit the probability that many people have

received abundant and convincing evidence of discarnate life, but evidence, in order to be convincing to all, must come through the channel of facts whose verification is unquestioned.

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PRIMITIVE RELIGION



I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS SENSE

RELIGION is a growth that had its inception in efforts of the human mind to unravel the mystery of being. Following lines of least resistance, human thought accepted the apparent constitution of matter and force, and mistaking subjective creations for objective realities, constructed a fabric in which this peculiarity of mental constitution furnished the warp, and the strange and mysterious phenomena of the physical world the woof. Behind all — the efficient cause of all — were supernatural beings possessed of infinite capacities for good or evil. This is the genesis and fundamental idea of religion. The function of religion is to put man into communication with these supernatural intelligences.

This conception (which is universal) and the methods employed to express it constitute religion.

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From this definition it will be seen that any and all modes of mental action in which this concept is involved are religious. The most absurd and loathsome superstition that has for its object the conciliation of, and communion with these unseen powers is religion just as much as the most refined and spiritualized type.

Given primeval man — gradually awakening to consciousness of apperceptive faculties; he was surrounded on every side by danger, — from animals that surpass him in strength; from his own kind more merciless than the beasts; from the rigors of climate, the storm, the flood, hunger, cold, and disease. His death was almost certain to be a violent one.

To ameliorate this hard environment he would naturally employ every faculty of his mind. To this end he would become keenly observant of the conditions around him, alive to nature's resources and methods, for upon them entirely depended his supply of food, and his ability to overcome adverse surroundings. The alternation of day and night, the orderly arrangement of the seasons, the invariable results from the operations of nature

upon which he could with certainty depend, would inevitably suggest a purposeful intelligence. As his experience knew intelligence only as associated with a body, and its manifestation only through the medium of bodily attributes, a concept of personal divinity would grow up within him, not necessarily of human form, but more likely of some animal or object whose superior strength or awful aspect would suggest illimitable power. As time elapsed the limitations of this material god would begin to appear, the conception would begin to take on a spiritualized form, but the visible object would still continue to be the symbol of the divine.

The importance of securing the favor of this divine personality would soon engage the attention of early man, and to accomplish this he would resort to exactly the same means he would employ to secure the favor of one of his own kind upon whom he depended for life and the means of sustaining it. This would be by acknowledging his dependence, exalting to the highest degree the consequence and glory of his patron, belittling himself so as to make the contrast all the more marked, preferring petitions in which he professes to

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rely for their fulfilment, not on any right or merit he possesses, but on the magnanimity — the gracious condescension of his Lord.

These concepts however, would not be achieved in one age, one millennium, nor perhaps in a decade of millenniums. The light of history, and investigation among savage people, while it illumines primitive conditions, fails to reach back into this formative period of man's intellectual and spiritual natures. But the laws that govern development along any and all lines make it reasonably certain that the religious sense was a growth from causes as outlined above.

We must not suppose, however, that man's religious faculties are to be wholly accounted for by his material surroundings; there are other potent factors that aided in this development. There are forces in nature besides those that have to do with matter in its gross and tangible form. They are the activities of the intangible world. Some of their properties are made known to us through the phenomena of hypnotism, mind-reading, clairvoyance, telepathy, etc. Many of them are unexplained or but dimly understood, but we cannot doubt that the same great law of cau-

sation that reveals nature's methods in the material universe, holds the key to these mysterious activities. Mental constitution has been moulded and has acquired its present attributes and functions, not only by objective experience, but also through the agency of the unseen, ever-present forces whose action is immediate. They have to do with the subjective states and conditions of mind, from which are born hallucination, hysteria, and kindred nervous affections, as well as abnormal development of the emotional that prevail among people low in the scale of civilization.

All savage and half-civilized people are intensely religious, despite what some leaders in the intellectual world may say to the contrary. Their grounds for the assertion that there are savage people who have no beliefs concerning God, a hereafter, or man's communication with unseen powers, are found in the reports of missionaries and travellers, most of whom are ignorant of the laws that govern psychic activity, and are totally wanting in ability to grasp the meaning of the peculiarities that mark the savage mind. The savage is naturally secretive; he instinctively feels that civilized man, who seldom shows

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anything but indifference and contempt for manners and customs that vary but ever so little from his own, would be wholly incompetent to understand and appreciate his conception of divine things. Besides it is an almost universal trait of humanity to shroud religious beliefs in esoteric doctrines, designed for and understood by the initiated alone, who must be members of the tribe, who have reached a certain age, who have undergone a painful and laborious initiation, and, above all, have been sworn to absolute secrecy. Outside this kernel an exoteric form, for the benefit of the uninitiated, is usually put forth that shadows in gross, ambiguous, and misleading terms these inner truths.

The scientific methods of the present day, as applied to every phase of life, have opened up to human understanding a vast array of verifiable facts, establishing beyond question that no happening whatever comes from supernatural causes, but is the necessary consequence of natural events.

Psychology in its modern developments has revealed the outline of mental structure, and explains many of the working parts, enough so that mental states and conditions and the

processes of thought are fairly well understood. Although the youngest of the sciences, it has demonstrated the fact that the promise and potency of mind are contained in the lowest forms of life, the unicellular organism, just as certainly as these forms contain the inherent capability of physical growth and development. From this science we learn that ideas originate primarily from impressions on the nerves of sense. The physiological features of this process consist of such an excitation of the nerve ends as to send thrills along the neural pathway to some nerve centre, where they are converted into consciousness. We can connect the fact of nervous irritability with consciousness as cause and effect; the consequent awareness is known as sensation. Sensation is the first indication of life, no matter how simple the structure. The first exhibit it makes of vital power is in response to stimuli, proving this fact. From such simple beginnings all mind is developed. In unicellular organisms the presence of a will and the rudiments of reason are detected in the choice of food and the avoidance of danger. Through multicellular forms the development continues and culminates in the

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mind of man with its highly specialized functions.

To one conversant with the now well-known laws that govern the universe of matter, who sees in their unerring and constant operation indubitable evidence of like unerring and constant obedience to fixed and unchanging laws in the realm of mind, organic evolution fully explains every phase and feature of mental behavior. All intelligent activity is based upon the certainty that like will produce like, that what has been will be.

The unchanging attitude that nature preserves toward her own laws, and the absolute dependence that can be placed upon their operation in every instance, furnishes the foundation upon which experience builds all that it is possible to know. What concept is possible that does not depend, for every particular, upon material furnished by experience? What thought can be made intelligible, either to the thinker himself or to others, that does not employ for its expression terms drawn either primarily from sense perception, or secondarily from association and comparison? Instinct and intuition are but inherited experiences of the past that through habit have be-

come a part of the mental furnishings of a race. Innumerable things which with the individual require physical dexterity are, in their beginnings, purely mental. Every movement is under the immediate supervision of mind, which is incessantly sending its orders along the efferent nerves to muscles engaged in the unaccustomed labor. By degrees the muscles acquire the habit of performance, and in proportion mental attention is remitted until finally expertness becomes automatism, the muscles perform the work without conscious direction. What is true of the individual may become true of the race.

We are accustomed to the generally accepted belief that man is made up of two distinct entities, body and soul. That the latter possesses attributes and functions transcending nature, derived directly from a divine source, and totally independent of the laws nature imposes. We are taught to regard this divine source as the embodiment of moral perfection, and to believe that there is an indissoluble connection between religious duties, that is, the feelings and acts of men which relate to God, and the obviously human duties that relate to man. Morality is gen-

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erally looked upon as the complement of religion, the two as parts of one whole. This view however, has no foundation in fact, because the two are derived from totally different sources. We have only to examine the pages of history, or indeed to note the lives of many eminently pious people of the present day, to learn that the essentials of religion are not dependent upon moral conduct; on the other hand we have only to look abroad in the world to be convinced that the most moral are quite apt to be skeptics so far as religion is concerned.

The moral sense of a people depends very largely upon their intellectual status. The more intelligent the more moral is a truism that can hardly be disputed; and another, equally true but probably not so readily admitted, is, the more intelligent the less religious. Morality is refined selfishness. Men are moral because it pays them to be so. Their interests can be served only when the interests of others receive equal consideration. This entails the abandonment of license and the recognition of authority. It necessitates laws and a law-abiding spirit. Its advantages appear in peace, security, and protection. Per-

sonal vices are unquestionably distasteful to moral people everywhere, but this distaste is the inherited result of habit that had its inception in an appreciation of the ill immorality breeds.

He who takes pains to inform himself regarding the moral standards of different people will be struck with the fact that a general code which will apply in all cases, to every people, has hardly yet been formulated. Any and all rules for moral conduct contemplate only a limited application; they are usually confined to the limits of a tribe, nation, or particular religious faith. When these limits are overstepped moral obligation ceases.

We have only to recall the principle preached, believed, and thoroughly lived up to in the early part of our own colonial history — that the aborigines of America were children of the devil, and to take their lives and land was doing God's service — to understand the character of the moral sense that pervaded the most religious community in the world three centuries ago. In our own day the exploitation of Eastern lands, and the spoiling of Eastern people by the Western nations, show the same disregard for the

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principles of right, justice, and humanity. For the past hundred and fifty years England has been draining the wealth of India, once the richest country on earth, until now millions of the Indian people die yearly of starvation. Recent disclosures in the Congo Valley reveal a system of extortion and brutality that ranks with the Spanish inhumanities in the West Indies during the early part of the sixteenth century. Every first-class power on earth at the present day is seeking opportunities for exploiting some inferior race, and in return for the substantial gain they hope to secure for themselves, they propose to force what they claim to be the inestimable advantages of their own civilization upon these unwilling people. Wherever the white man's civilization has touched the darker races, the touch has been a leprous one. Vice, immorality, disease, and death follow in its train. The uprooting of social, moral, political, and religious institutions, time-honored customs and traditions, and changes in manner of living, means, in a majority of cases, extinction.

✓ Morality, although it has its roots in the blackest subsoil of human character, yet grows

and expands, like water-lilies rooted in filthy ooze, into fragrant and beautiful flowers. From selfishness, that has no wish except to gratify brutish appetite and passion, has been evolved all that we know and admire in justice, mercy, altruism, and the personal virtues.

Religion, on the other hand, in its earlier stages made no pretence at ethics, such as we in this age understand to be the laws of morality. It claimed its province was to explain the cosmos, and to establish relations between man and the powers that rule in the unseen world. The essentials for the establishment of these relations in every religion are the observance of rites and ceremonies that either by actual practice or implication are based upon what modern sentiment in any other field would regard as immoral. Blood and obscenity, cruelty and deception figure largely in the cults of most of the religions of the earth, while unquestioning obedience and blind faith are accounted as the highest forms of virtue. The duties man owes to his fellow men and to himself are of so little importance that their performance possesses no merit whatever, — they are absolutely valueless as

an asset in determining spiritual solvency in the great hereafter. Strict observance of what religion lays down as duty toward God is the vital condition of safety from divine displeasure and consequent punishment.

Professor Brinton, in his "Religions of Primitive People," mentions what he terms a startling discovery. It is: "that the laws of thought are frightfully rigid, are indeed automatic and inflexible. The human mind seems to be a machine; give it the same material and it will infallibly grind out the same product. Wherever we turn in time or space to the earliest religions of the world, we find them dealing with nearly the same objective facts in nearly the same subjective fashion, the difference being due to local and temporal causes." He claims, and the argument he puts forth seems to justify the claim, that this unity of action of man's intelligence applies to the whole range of human development, and that it enables us to view all early religions as having a common origin and developing along the same lines.

The universal features common to every religion are best observed in the faiths of primitive man. With senses untrained and

abnormal, he sees, hears, and feels, not only that which impresses sensory nerves from without, but he is also subject to mental conditions that excite these neural forces from within, and he fails to distinguish between the two. His exploits in dreamland are equally real with those of his waking hours. Reason is subordinate to feeling. Credulity and nervous susceptibility characterize the activities of his mind. He measures everything by the standard of his own personality, hence all around him is endued with life and sentiency like himself. Animism is an involuntary trait of the human mind; it may be noted in the acts of children, and even adults, who in civilized life often exhibit anger toward inanimate objects by kicks and blows. It persists in the literature of the present day. Tropes, similes, metaphor, and allegory, the beautiful garb in which poetic thought is dressed, are but survivals of the old idea — of an indwelling conscious spirit in all things.

There is one feature of animate nature that the inanimate world does not seem to share. That feature is death. The sun, moon, stars, the rivers, mountains, and seas, the earth itself, are visible objects whose untiring move-

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ments and unchanging aspects seem to proclaim a deathless existence, while light and darkness, the wind and rain, the storm with its thunder and lightning, cold and warmth, the generative and vivifying power of nature, suggest the work of unseen beings endowed with eternal life, whose power and scope of activity transcends human comprehension. At every turn man encounters phenomena that can be explained only on the hypothesis of supernatural intelligences, whose character he determines by the good or ill their activities bring him. Sickness and sorrow, pain and death suggest a class of malevolent beings at whose mercy he seems to be unless he can secure the protection and help of the all-powerful ones, whom in his mind he associates with light and life, warmth and fertility. Wherever the human species are found in primitive conditions, ideas something like these prevail, and they are by no means absent from the highest, most spiritualized forms of religion.

Investigation has revealed the dual character of human consciousness. We are constantly subjected to impressions on our nerves of sense, many of which fix our attention and

are consciously stored in the archives of our memory ready for instant use. But by far the greater part fail of recognition, and when our faculties are in normal condition and active, they are beneath the surface and unknown. It is when the mental machine has suspended its ordinary work, in sleep, disease, or some hypersensitive condition of the nervous system, that these unremembered impressions rise to the surface and take form. It is from this region of our unconscious experiences that arise the dim and often incoherent crowds that people our imagination. It is a storehouse filled with the material of forgotten things. Mental processes in this department of our being are unceasingly in operation, working results that often astonish us with their accuracy and value. It is from this source that genius draws largely for its clever creations.

These facts help to explain the religious sense, whose history is the history of human thought seeking to solve the mysteries of the unknown. Conscious experience, unless unduly swayed by prejudice or credulity, affords but little material for their solution, for from the ordinary activities of the mind, by which

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facts can be appraised and truth verified, there is almost nothing that would tend to aid in this development. It is a product that can only be secured by the employment of a *pri-ori* methods, by assuming that knowledge precedes experience, by assertion that can only be proved by an appeal to divine inspiration and revelation, and above all by unquestioning faith in the reality of these postulates. Now the underconsciousness of man provides just the material from which to construct the religious sense. It is the realm of dreams, visions, somnambulism, ecstasy, and kindred nervous affections, products of mental perception which have no external cause; and the nearer we approach primitive conditions the more abundant this material becomes. Primitive man lives in a state of mysticism in which there are no clearly defined lines between the real and the seeming. His views are taken from a subjective standpoint, and with him feeling takes the place of reason. This trait is by no means confined to the lower races; for while with them it is universal, yet in the most highly civilized communities a large majority are governed almost exclusively by sentiment and feeling. The tremendous

power of suggestion accounts largely for the success that in Christian countries has attended the efforts of revivalists and the promoters of numberless "isms." This power, so well defined in civilized life, reaches the limit of intensity with the savage. With him suggestion, usually self-induced, so distorts his perceptive faculties that he is unable to make distinction between the normal and supernatural in his daily life. That he sees God in the storm and hears him in the wind is for him no flight of poetic fancy, but the actuality of his experience. He hears the whisperings of his subliminal activities and believes them voices from another world.

From these basic causes may be traced every religious impulse that ever blessed or cursed the world, for religion has been neither an unmixed good nor an unmixed evil. It comprehends every phase, from the lowest superstition to the most exalted and refined conception of the divine; from the rude and brutal cults of the savage, devoid of every humane sentiment, to the spiritual faiths of the highest civilizations, and its development from lower to higher levels, more perfect forms, is the unchangeable expression of na-

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ture's methods. Its hold upon the lower races is inexorable; it enters into and controls their daily life; their cults are filled with charms, exorcisms, omens, forecasts, prayers, incantations, and priestly ritual; it exercises the tabu in numberless ways; in short, it cannot be conceived as separate from any human activity. Its consequences are invariably the development of a priestly class, primarily from those that possess the greatest magnetic and hypnotic power. By cultivation these powers usually become the traits of families, and give rise to hereditary priesthoods with their divine character and sacred privileges. All this is built upon human ignorance and credulity. The reign of law — the directing of phenomena by invariable methods — is beyond the capacity of savage or primitive man to conceive. With him every event of nature and life is the immediate manifestation of some divine power, between whom and himself stands the priest as mediator.

From obvious causes the evolution of the religious faculty in primitive man led, without any known exception, to deification of natural objects and forces. In most cases the overarching sky became the high God, —

the father and creator of all lesser divinities. The dual character of physical surroundings, in which every good seemed to be opposed by an antithesis of evil, early engaged the attention of mankind. Light was opposed by darkness, warmth by cold, sunshine by storm, health and life by disease and death. The revivification of nature coincident with the ascent of the sun at the vernal, and the decay and death that follows his decline at the autumnal equinox, was soon observed, and the natural conclusion drawn that he was a divine being to whom mankind owed all their physical welfare; that his labor for them was of the nature of a conflict with the powers of cold, darkness, and storm. That in one-half of his annual course he was victorious, the all-sufficient champion of their cause, but that in the other half the powers of evil triumphed. Hence the myths concerning his death and resurrection that have so prominent a place in almost every religion.

Man's earliest introspection must have revealed to him his own dual nature, and that the intangible, immaterial part of himself constituted the essence of his being. He must have been conscious that within himself was

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a masterful power that dominated the activities of his body, subject to his will. Conscious of his own personality, he would naturally ascribe to all visible objects similar consciousness of being and power of volition. The limitations of his own nature, however, would vividly impress him with the immensity of the world at large, and fill him with a feeling that behind the sensuous and phenomenal, giving to all material things form and activity, lies Mind, — the ultimate source of conscious intelligence, to which his own mind corresponds, so far as the finite can be the analogue of the infinite; and that this inexhaustible source of all intelligence, all life and being, is cognizant and mindful of him. This belief, that man is in communication with the powers that govern the universe, is common to every religion. To suggestion and the practice of rites and ceremonies that tend to excite and increase the mystical feeling and suppress the exercise of reason may be traced the extravagances that characterize them all. The shamans and medicine-men of savage life, by fasting and physical austerities, or by the use of some drug that induces an overwrought condition of the nervous system, are able to

see invisible appearances and hear inaudible voices. These subjective creations possess all the vividness of objective reality. These men unquestionably believe themselves to be the chosen means of communicating with divine beings. To them, what they see and hear while in these ecstatic moods possesses the character of revelation; their acts are inspired acts, and their words are believed to be the words of the very god himself. In civilized communities these same idiosyncrasies may be noted. It is the general belief among religious people everywhere that, by fasting and prayer, or by the sacrifice of personal comfort, exactly the same ecstatic conditions can be induced, in which direct communication with deity can be established, and divine consolation and guidance vouchsafed. Would it not be the limit of inconsistency to deny to the savage the reality of his visions, and assert for the Christian the reality of his?

With primitive man death was never the result of natural causes. He had no conception of the decline and extinction of vital power except through the direct agency of some supernatural personality, who took possession of the victim and wrought his destruc-

tion. It is said that no primitive language possesses words that express death in any other sense. We know that up to the sixteenth century, in the most civilized nations of Europe, pathology had made little or no advance upon these aboriginal ideas.

It is around the grave that beliefs regarding a future life take form. We may love and cherish the personality of our friends as a whole, their features and physical peculiarities become dear to us, yet behind all that, we recognize that the light of the eye, the music in the voice, and the thousand and one ways that endear them to us and fix their identity in our minds, is due to the conscious animating principle within — that immaterial part to which we have given the name of soul. We instinctively feel that this, the real part of their being, is not obliterated, but withdrawn by death. How much more vividly then does primitive man, who always lives on the borders of the unseen, controlled by the emotions and unaided by reason, see and feel the reality of a future life and picture it with his rude and fanciful imagery. With him this nearness to what he believes a better world minimizes his fear of death, and accounts in large

measure for the stoicism with which he views its approach.

The association of light with that which is good and worshipful is another feature of primitive thought, and for similar reasons darkness is associated with evil. Light brings health, life, warmth, and fertility, and disperses with the shades of night the evil and malevolent. On the other hand, as darkness settles down upon the world, noxious vapors, dangerous animals, ghosts, hobgoblins, vampires, and uncanny beings from the nether world come forth from their hiding-places to assail and destroy mankind and his works.

The artificialities of this age have destroyed in a large measure man's touch with nature. The phenomena that surround him, except for the very few, awaken no emotion above the practical and commonplace; no feeling of awe or wonder, much less sentiments of love, gratitude, or fear. With the average man the overarching sky, the phenomenon of light, the changes wrought by the seasons, are never given a thought. He goes about, his mind filled with the business or pleasures of this life, having neither time nor inclination to cast more than a cursory glance at the marvellous

exhibitions of nature's power that surround him on every side. This apathetic attitude toward the wondrous mechanism of the universe is due, unquestionably, to the findings of modern science. What through all the ages had been looked upon as the direct agency of a divine personality, has been established beyond controversy to be the result of natural law and resident force — an unbroken chain of cause and effect. This principle is established not only for the operations of nature in one of her departments, but also in every corner of her domain, physical, psychical, moral, and religious; hence the change in human conceptions, the retirement of the mysterious, the marvellous, and the occult from nature's activities, and the consequent extinguishment of the feelings of awe, wonder, admiration, and dread that were the paramount emotions of primitive man. That these latest concepts of universal energy, resident in every atom of that plenum we call space, are immeasurably in advance of the primitive view, can hardly be questioned. Still this gain has been attended with some loss. Primitive man saw behind the activities of nature that favored him in his struggle


for existence, the kind and considerate care of a friendly power, which evoked in him sentiments of love and worship. The emotional side of his nature received development such as modern civilization fails to give, and from the emotional are evolved the finer feelings and the æsthetic tastes.

To the faculty of speech man owes his ascendancy over the brute creation. It makes social life possible; it renders available for man's use the accumulated wisdom and experience of the race. It opens up to his comprehension unlimited possibilities for knowledge. By its means we enter into sympathy with, and share the highest hopes, the loftiest aspirations, the most refined sensibilities, and catch the grandest views of life. On the other hand, its suggestions reach and awaken response from the lowest depth of human depravity. A word often suffices to arouse the noblest purpose, or the most degrading passion.

The mystery of language impressed itself most strongly upon the savage mind. The abundant and comprehensive medium for the expression of every shade of thought in our own day, we use as unconsciously as the air

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we breathe; but with primitive man the case was different. With imaginative faculties trained to catch any overtone from the unseen, and keenly observant of all that surrounded him, his only mode of voicing the emotions that surged within him or expressing his conception of general truths, was by figures of speech, metaphor, and allegory. He, therefore, who could make use of these imperfect means to express the thoughts and imaginings of his own mind, so as to evoke in the minds of his hearers the picture, the reasoning, or more especially the emotions that were occupying his own, was looked upon as a semi-divine person. These were the orators, the poets, and priests of savage life — men who by the power of words were able to seize and maintain supremacy over the common herd. To them this power seemed supernatural, and they attributed to words themselves, especially to names, a divine character. They seemed the efficient cause of the most momentous results, independent of their uses as a means of conveying ideas. Hence “the Echo,” a bodiless voice, “the Word,” which, according to the Evangelist, “was God,” and “the Ineffable Name” that figured so largely in



the cults of Gnosticism, expressed the ancient conception of the mightiest force in the universe. According to Lenormant, "In all the religions of ancient Asia, the Mysterious Name was considered a real divine being who had a personal existence, and exclusive power over both nature and the world of spirits." So dread were the consequences of an irreverent allusion to the name of deity, that with many people the sacred name was not allowed to be spoken, and on this account the real names of many divinities have been lost. This was notably the case with the deity of the Israelitish nation, for whom the name Jehovah (the strong one) was substituted; also the supreme God of the Arabs, to whom the name Allah (the mighty one) was given. The belief was general that the right names of gods or demons in and of themselves possessed such potency that their use would compel the presence and aid of these supermundane beings. The awful effectiveness of the curse, sufficient in many cases, in savage and half-civilized life, to strike the offending person against whom it was launched dead upon the spot, was due to belief in this compelling power. Hence these names were carefully

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guarded, and kept from the common people lest the knowledge should be abused and the dignity of the divine beings suffer in consequence. From this source may be traced the common practice of profanity in our own day. It is a survival from those imprecations so freely launched against enemies in ancient times, that have lost their effectiveness and become meaningless and unseemly jargon. From this source also may be traced all magic, incantations, exorcisms, etc. They are founded upon the belief that a knowledge of names, or of certain formularies, possesses the power of controlling all the forces of the spirit world.

The means by which man in all ages, climes, and conditions seeks to express his spiritual connection with the powers above is worship, which possesses everywhere the same general features. It is through prayer, praise, gifts, and the practice of certain rites and ceremonies that he expresses the feeling that he is a creature of their creation, endowed to some extent with their divine qualities, and therefore may feel reasonably sure of their kind and loving disposition toward him. This feeling impels him to voice his love and gratitude

in terms that express the highest regard, the most exalted sense of their divine power and goodness, and he emphasizes this feeling with his choicest gifts. Now the forms in which these feelings are expressed, even the very words of praise, petition, penitence, the deprecatory language used, all are so nearly identical as to force the conclusion that mental action everywhere, if material surroundings are similar, will be guided along the same channels and develop substantially the same concepts.

The ills of life to which people in all ages have been subjected suggested to the early thinkers of the race that there were not only malevolent beings who take delight in tormenting men, but that the gods themselves were offended at any slight that might be put upon them or their worship. Disappointment, sorrow, sickness, pain, and death were often regarded as the consequence of the withdrawal of divine protection and care, or even as punishment by direct act of deity. Propitiation, therefore, was the chief concern of the afflicted; and those in prosperous circumstances were eager to purchase the continuance of divine favor by costly gifts and careful atten-

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tion to the established rites and usages of worship.

By universal consent blood was regarded as the most precious substance that could be offered. It was looked upon as life itself, and life in all ages has been considered of inestimable value to its possessor. Hence the use of blood by man, except for religious purposes, was forbidden in nearly all the ancient cults. It was used for sacrificial purposes, being looked upon as the peculiarly appropriate offering to the creator and preserver of all life. Thus originated sacrifice; the oceans of blood, not an insignificant part of which was human, shed upon the altars of almost every religion in the world, attest the prevalence of this idea, and it will be noticed further that this blood has been shed vicariously. The instances are rare indeed where the shedder of blood does not seek to atone for his own sins by shedding the blood of another. The belief in vicarious atonement is the necessary complement of the sacrificial doctrine, — they are indissoluble parts of one religious conception.

Closely associated with the doctrine of sacrifice and atonement were solemn and grue-

some feasts, in which the blood of the human victim was either mixed with grain, or kneaded with flour and baked into cakes. Of this holy food the people partook. These were the practices of the ancient Germans, many of the Asiatics, the Mexicans, and all, so far as known, of the people of Central and South America. The similarity of these rites to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was noticed by the Spanish conquerors of the New World, and attributed by them to the malice of the devil. These facts recall the persistent charges, so indignantly repudiated by the early Christian Church, that in their agape they partook of the blood and flesh of a new-born infant, thus giving a real significance to what in later ages became a mild symbolism.

This opens the way for the very general belief in every part of the world that divine personages, *always virgin-born*, have appeared at various times and places, filled with pity for the fallen condition of the human race, have assumed the load of human guilt, and usually expiated in some bloody way human sin.

That certain numbers have a sacred sig-

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nificance in almost every religion is another well-known fact. Keil's Manual of Biblical Archæology states: "Four was the predominating number in the temples, altars, and rites of the ancient world, it being, according to an idea common to all antiquity, the symbol of the cosmos; while the *three* was the mark of the divine being, in his various manifestations." Westcott, in his "Symbolism of Numbers," says: "It is impossible to study any single system of worship throughout the world without being struck by the peculiar persistence of the triple number in regard to divinity."

A belief in a future life is as wide-spread as the human race. Indeed it is the essential of religion. Connected with this belief is that of the resurrection of the dead. It is impossible for a vast majority of mankind to dissociate the idea of personal identity from the physical body. The means taken to preserve human remains from dissolution, and the permanence and care bestowed upon their final resting-place, by many of the ancient people attest the prevalence of this idea.

The tree has figured in nearly all the religions of the world as the emblem of eternal

life. Under the form of the cross, its employment to express this idea reaches back beyond written history. Such allusions as Genesis, 2d chapter, 9th verse, show that the authors of the Hebrew Scriptures, who no doubt drew their inspiration from Babylonian sources, regarded the tree of life as an essential feature of their religious faith. Throughout Asia, Europe, and Northern Africa, so far as we know, either the tree or cross was a sacred symbol with the significance we have mentioned, while in America the same was true almost without exception.

Every religion has its sacred places, always associated with its divine founder or some divine manifestation, to which pilgrimages are made, and at which the souls of impressionable devotees are filled with mysterious, holy influences which they ascribe to immediate communion with their divinity.

The beginnings of home, family, and society are to be looked for in animal life, so that when the human stage is reached they have become well-defined instincts. So far as we can know and judge, however, they began to assume distinctively human characteristics only when the human mind became able to

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begin generalization, — to connect the objective world with causes. The exhibition of seemingly almighty power in the phenomena of nature would inevitably proclaim an almighty personality behind it, and man's experience, filled as it has always been with examples of the attitude of power and might toward weakness and impotence, would force the conclusion that this superhuman power must be mollified and approached as the weak ones of the world have ever approached the strong. This would give a new direction to man's social development, for to the motives of safety and protection, that no doubt account very largely for communal life among animals, is added the common necessity of dealing with this higher power from which there could be no escape. The principal factors, however, in social development were the strong personalities that guided and voiced this dimly conscious sense in early man, — the explorers in the new and untried fields of human thought. These pioneers soon discovered the trend of the human mind, and the ✓ universal tendency to treat as objective the products of subjective activity. Not that these men were consciously playing upon

human credulity, for they were subject to the inexorable methods of mental behavior that evolved the same general features of human thought in every corner of the world. While they were the thinkers, the formulators of the rude and imperfect beginnings of systems that persist to the present day, yet in common with all mankind their susceptibility to impressions that appealed to the sensibilities dominated all their intellectual efforts. They formed but a part of the current, which they might in some measure be able to direct and guide into channels that would enlarge their own influence and importance, and subserve their own interests; but the systems they helped to elaborate were beyond their powers to invent.

From primeval to primitive conditions is an immense step in human development, but when the latter stage is reached, we find exactly what we might expect the formative ✓ process, outlined above, would produce. The leaders have become the priests, and every function of society has become religious. The individual, the family, the tribe, and the nation have become subject to the inexorable dictates of religion. The tabu — thou shalt

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not — meets the individual at every turn, and he is irrevocably bound to the observance of rites and ceremonies that practically cover every activity of his life. All law becomes divine law, because, while given through priest or king, it emanates from the divine power above. Its authority is final, and infraction means punishment for the immortal as well as the mortal part of man. Art, literature, and the practical sciences developed along lines whose ultimate object was the expression of this religious sense. History grew out of desire to record and perpetuate it, and even the beginnings of modern science are founded in efforts to enforce by teleological considerations the primary importance of man and his intimate relation to God in the divine plan of the universe.

These are some, but by no means all, of the characteristics of religion which are general throughout the world. They are sufficient, however, to point out a common source, and as neither the theory of inheritance from common ancestry nor adoption from neighboring people can, in a large majority of cases, be held to account for the identities we find, the conclusion is forced upon us that there

is a uniform mode of mental action where material surroundings are of the same general character, that fully explains the lines on which these common concepts develop. To the superficial observer there seems to be radical differences between the various forms of human thought, and innumerable features that serve to distinguish them, but these are but the foliage and flowering which have only to be brushed aside to reveal the stem that connects with the common root. That this growth is a natural growth in all cases but one, and in that not a growth at all, but a divine unfolding by supernatural means, is too obvious an absurdity to deserve serious consideration; yet it is exactly what is claimed for itself by every religious sect upon the broad face of the earth. In spite of all the wars that have been waged, and the blood that has been shed to maintain these various claims, the fact stands out plain and clear, that all are derived from the same source and are substantially one. Nature is adequate to achieve, and science able to explain, every process connected with this development.

Science and religion have no common ground upon which they can meet. Science

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deals with facts, and her inferences are drawn only from such as can be verified. She insists that there is a broad line drawn between knowledge and belief; that knowledge depends for its existence upon verified truth, while belief can never reach beyond probability. We do not believe what we know, — we simply know it. Knowledge comes by exercise of faculties in normal condition, — from conscious cerebration. Religion, on the other hand, insists that belief (faith) is superior to knowledge, that truth is revealed from above, and that we know it intuitively. It originates in subconscious cerebration; from the same mysterious tract whence our dreams, visions, trances, and the idiocrasies shown by somnambulism and hypnotism arise, and it has been fostered in its development by false and misleading notions of the laws and forces that govern the universe.

✓ The religious sense is a human sense, acquired by human experience through untold ages of misconception and ignorance, solely by human means, in accordance with inexorable law, just as every other human faculty has been developed. To be sure, it has filled a larger place in human thought than any

other intellectual sense, and it is a most important factor in moulding human character, not always along lines that excite our admiration and respect, yet often it seems to create pure, noble, and beautiful lives. When guided by reason and subject to intelligent restraint, the ideals this sense brings to view exert a powerful and salutary influence upon the individual and upon the community.



BABYLONIAN RELIGION

I

THE ASSYRIO - BABYLONIAN CIVILIZATION AND RELIGION

“So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.”

“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.”

“And upon her forehead *was* a name written, *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and the Abominations of the Earth.*” (Revelation, 17th chap., 3d, 4th, 5th verses.)

For eighteen hundred years every imaginable change has been rung upon these and similar texts tending to intensify, if possible, a belief in the horrible depravity of this an-

cient centre of an ancient civilization that had dominated the world for more than six thousand years, and had given it its first and greatest lesson in civilized life.

Whatever prejudices we may have inherited or absorbed from this insistent association of ancient Babylon with all manner of iniquity and sin, must be laid aside if we wish to arrive at a just estimate of the character of Babylonian civilization and the influence it has exerted in the formation of later, and, perhaps, in some respects, higher types. We must remember that ours is inherited; that all that is fundamental—all the essentials—came to us through the initiative of races long since dead and forgotten; that we have been supplied through them with material, tools, and numberless experiences that ought to enable us to show an immeasurable advance in human progress. Certainly this age can claim a better understanding of the character of the physical activities of the world. Forces that to early man were unknown, or that were regarded with superstitious veneration, have been utilized to minister to the wants of modern man; but it is an open question whether or not the most enlightened nations

of the present day can show better social conditions, laws more comprehensive and equitable, morality developed upon a higher plane, and religion less bedraggled with the mire of mystery and miracle, than this earliest known civilization of the world.

That there may have been civilizations that antedated this is among the probabilities of the past, but so far as mankind at the present day has been able to explore, Babylonia was the first to emerge from tribal conditions and assume a national character. The first glimpses of this people reveal them already in possession of an advanced civilization. They were living in fixed homes, had passed the savage, hunting, and pastoral stages of human development, and had become skilful agriculturists, artisans, and builders, and successful merchants. They had acquired the art of writing, and had an extensive literature. They had constructed elegant cities and filled them with the products of skilled industry. Political, social, and religious institutions that were to be the pattern for all coming generations, even down to the present day, were fully established upon permanent foundations.

When we look for the beginnings of these orderly and cultured conditions, we find but little upon which to base certain knowledge. The peculiar formation of the country, however, a gradual growth due to the action of the two rivers that flow through its entire length, suggests the probability that civilization developed and expanded with the expansion of the land, and the remains of paleolithic and neolithic man, if found at all, must be looked for in the very northern end of the Babylonian plain. It is certain that at a period which seems to us extremely old, yet which in the history of this planet would be accounted recent, the waters of the Persian Gulf extended northwest of its present shore line more than three hundred and fifty miles. From data furnished by the known accretion of the land since the time of Alexander the Great, the formation of this plain has occupied not less than thirty thousand years. Well-developed states, enjoying a civilized life that far outranks that of many so-called civilized countries of the present day, were undoubtedly in existence more than ten thousand years ago. We have good evidence that such was the case.

Who these people were has been the subject of many an angry dispute arising out of what, in past ages, has been considered the necessity of maintaining the Biblical account of the distribution of the human race. In this age far more comprehensive views have been adopted by scholars and investigators, and the Hamitic myth has ceased to claim attention. The origin of mankind is now almost universally conceded to have been the result of evolutionary methods, and there are sufficient grounds for believing that the human race appeared and spread from more than one centre. That the human species was originally divided into at least two distinct varieties, arising in widely separated localities and spreading outward from their centres of dispersion until they met and intimately mingled at their borders, is probable from what we know of earth's present population and the discoveries of the past. The two races whose peculiarities appear most marked and most widely divergent are the Mongolian and the negro. The physical characteristics of the former proclaim a race immeasurably older than the latter, yet it is by the mingling of the two, and the further amalgamation of

their descendants, that the races and sub-races that people the earth at the present day are believed to have been derived. From this source, it now seems probable, was developed the Caucasian or white race, which evidently stands intermediate between the two, exhibiting a flexibility of racial characteristics limited only by the fixed characters on either side.

From whatever source the white race sprung, their habitat at the beginning of the historical period certainly included Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia. It was within these limits that that grand division known as "Semitic" flourished and achieved a civilization far in advance of any contemporaneous development, and so far as Babylonia is concerned there is little evidence of prior occupancy. The early Assyriologists, however, supposed that the first inhabitants were non-Semitic, basing their views, first, upon the genealogical tables found in the Hebrew Scriptures, and second, upon what they considered the non-Semitic character of the early language. Because this language was agglutinative they supposed these people Turanian, although they have been unable to trace an

affinity to any of the Turanian groups. The inflectional character of the later speech may undoubtedly be accounted for by the forms of growth that language assumes as it develops. All languages change, and the Semitic at its best is said to contain unmistakable evidences of a late emergence from an agglutinative type. The later forms of Babylonian speech in all probability stood in relation to the older much as the Latin tongues of modern Europe stand to the ancient Roman. Customs and fashions also underwent changes, but not rapidly nor radically, for the Babylonian people were probably the most conservative that ever lived.

For the country we are considering "Babylonia" is a comparatively modern name, taken from the city of Babylon, that did not rise to prominence and become the capital and centre of empire until about the twenty-third century B. C. The more ancient designations for the land and people were Akkad for the northern group of city states, and Shumer for the southern. Of these the southern group was evidently more advanced in civilized conditions, her seaports giving her the advantages which maritime enterprise and

intercourse with foreign people are sure to bring.

The ancient records of this wonderful country thus far unearthed reach back about eighty-five hundred years. At that time Eridu, a maritime city, situated on the shores of the Persian Gulf, was evidently in possession of a civilization but little inferior to that of the last days of Babylonian supremacy, — six thousand years later. This city, the ruins of which are now more than one hundred and thirty miles from the shores of the gulf, fixes approximately this date, while Ur, thirty miles farther inland to the northwest, in considerably more ancient times had also been a seaport town. Within a radius of fifty miles from Ur were the flourishing city-states of Larsum, Uruk, Mar, and Shirpula, each with its well-defined limits of interurban fields teeming with agricultural life. Midway between this southern group and a similar group a hundred miles or more to the north stood the then ancient city of Nippur, whose patron deity was En-lil, “chief spirit,” also known as Bel, *i. e.* the lord *par excellence*. He was god of the lower world, and with Anu, the god of the heavens, and Ea, god

of the sea, formed the first great triad of the Babylonian pantheon. En-lil, or Bel, was father of Marduk, who in later ages became the supreme god of Babylonia, and in whom the attributes of all the other gods were finally merged. The worship of Bel was universal throughout the country, and it extended back so far into the prehistoric past as to make Nippur a religious centre, and give it a sacred character and prestige that could only come with a long period of political and religious prominence.

The northern group of city commonwealths was made up of Kutha, Sippar, Agade, Kullunu, and Kish. Babylon and its sister city, Borsippa, if in existence, were too insignificant to be noticed. At the dawn of the historical period the city-states of Babylonia were in a large measure independent of each other, yet sometimes coalescing under the hegemony of the most powerful one, and at other times forced into a dependent position by the superior might and ability of some one of the local kings. Whatever may have been the relations between these several points of civilized life there appears to have been a mutual respect for each other's domains, their

institutions, and especially their gods. All recognized the triad — Anu, Bel, and Ea — as the original gods from whom all others descended, and the chief divinity of one city usually occupied a subordinate position in the pantheon of the others.

Arabia has always been regarded as the original home of the Semites, and as far back as the light of history illumines we may note that at periods something like a thousand years apart a migratory spirit seems to awaken in this people, and, either by conquest or weight of numbers, they push back the surrounding people and to a considerable extent occupy their lands. The fertile plains of Babylonia seem to have been subject to a continuous stream of immigration from the Bedaway tribes on the west, to whom the manifest advantages of settled life and agricultural pursuits would attract considerable numbers. This influx had its influence, and tended to modify the character of the people; but besides this constant stream, the larger tides, in still more marked degree, left their impress upon the language and customs of the country.

Babylonia was often beset by races who

occupied her eastern border, and during her long history she was more than once compelled to accept the domination of Elamite and Kassite kings. But their reigns appear to have had little effect upon the character of the people. The customs, laws, manners, and religion of the country these kings adopted as their own, and, as in the case of the Kassite rulers, whose dominion endured more than five hundred years, they left little or no mark to indicate that they were anything but Semites.

Whoever were the indigenes of Babylonia, whether Semites or not, the names Sumerian and Akkadian are proper designations for the most ancient inhabitants of the land, — those occupying the country prior to the rise of Babylon as the centre and capital of a unified empire. They were the architects and builders of a civilization which existed practically unchanged for more than six thousand years, giving to their favored descendants permanent prosperity based upon equitable laws justly administered. Such a civilization stands unique in the history of the world, and when we compare it with our own, with its few hundred years of development, and view

the dangers that seem to threaten the very foundation of our institutions, a suspicion arises that perhaps these old-time people knew something of sociological questions and their treatment. With them the principle was recognized that the value of the country depended upon the material welfare of the people, and all means were used to perpetuate the laws and customs, the political and religious institutions that had contributed so essentially to these favored conditions. It was only when another race, the one that to-day vaunts itself with being the embodiment of human excellence, had by its greed, bigotry, and intolerance overturned and supplanted the ancient régime, that it faded from the world, leaving what had been for many millenniums earth's fairest region a desert waste.

A knowledge of the practical concerns of life must have been very generally diffused, for there are innumerable evidences found in the contract tablets, legal documents, and correspondence relating to business, pleasure, and social amenities, to prove that the people as a whole employed the same general methods of business and pleasure that are looked

upon as distinguishing features of the highest civilizations.

It must be borne in mind, however, that the dominant incentive for knowledge and its application was religion. This was due to the fact that the investigators, the ones who had charge of the literary activities and training of the young, belonged to the priestly class. These of course labored in the interest of religion. It was a necessity of their relation to the masses that they should be able to explain satisfactorily the cosmological questions that so insistently present themselves to every people, and that they should make these explanations accord as nearly as possible with the facts that constitute human experience. All natural phenomena were regarded as the activities of divine powers, and as in some way expressing the divine will for human guidance as the necessary means of attaining human happiness; hence the priest studied the heavens and became conversant with the movements of the heavenly bodies; he studied terrestrial phenomena, the mystery of life and growth, decay and death, of the physical forces manifested in the winds and storms, heat, cold, etc., all for the ultimate

purpose of putting himself in touch with these divine powers so as to know and interpret their will. When we consider the long periods of time necessary for accurately recorded observations of the heavenly bodies in order to calculate eclipses, the amount of intelligence that must be attained in order to grasp the conception of order and regularity in the recurrence of these events, and the accurate measurements of time upon which such calculations depend, we may feel assured that astronomy was far from its infancy at the earliest period to which the records carry us. At that remote time the heavens had been mapped, the stars named, the zodiac outlined, the twelve constellations that fill its borders traced, the great circle divided into 360 degrees to correspond with the 360 days of the year, each of these degrees representing the daily gain which the fixed stars make upon the sun in his circuit of the heavens. This had given rise to a sexagesimal system of notation. This unit, its factors and multiples formed the bases of their money, their weights, and their measures. In our own day we still employ it in measuring our time; it persists in our gross and dozen, and

it forms the basis of all geometrical calculation. To the same source we are indebted for the division of the zodiac into twelve spaces of thirty degrees each, giving rise to and corresponding with the twelve months of the year, the lunar cycle by which eclipses are calculated, weeks of seven days, and the institution of the Sabbath.

Investigation for the same sacred purpose would unavoidably lead to some knowledge of medicinal properties in plants and even in inorganic substances, and some skill in dealing with disease and personal injury; still the principal agency relied upon to effect cures, especially among the masses, was exorcism, — the driving out of the demons of disease by conjuration.

In mathematical science large and substantial progress had been made, primarily for purposes of augury and divination, which were adjuncts of their religion. This science was applied, however, for the practical purposes of measuring, not only the heavens, but also the earth. Land was accurately surveyed and stupendous works of building and irrigation projected and carried out by its means. It formed the basis of a compli-

cated and highly developed business life, in which financial, commercial, and manufacturing enterprises, unequalled for magnitude by those of any other ancient people, were successfully carried on, contributing very materially to the peace, security, and happiness of the people.

The lowest stratum upon which society was built was slavery; but no such slavery as that upon which the society of the southern half of this country rested but little more than a generation ago. In Babylonia a slave could hold property, — even be master of other slaves, — and behind him for his protection stood precedent, the common law of the land, dating back for unknown ages. In America the slave had no rights before the law, not even that of life. In Babylonia slaves might engage in business outside that of their masters, might purchase their own freedom, might acquire learning and rise to eminence and station. In America slaves could not own anything, could not legally purchase their own freedom; they were absolutely shut out from obtaining an education or bettering their condition in any way, for it was a crime to which severe penalties — imprison-

ment or death — were attached to teach them, or furnish any means whatever whereby they could acquire even the rudiments of an education. In Babylonia no slave could be sold away from his wife and children, no family separated. In America not the slightest regard for family ties ever obtained the least recognition in any enactment in any slave State. Certainly the code of Hammurabi, which embodies the principles of Babylonian judicature, ignores the rights of slaves, but the numerous contract tablets and official decisions which have been preserved fully substantiate these merciful laws and the humane treatment of Babylonian slaves.

The next step in the social ladder was the free laborers. In competition with slave labor it would seem their lot must have been the hardest of any class. They were extensively employed, however, and protected by laws that specified what the wage should be. Still, there was the tendency always present, where any considerable percentage of the laboring population are slaves, to degenerate into the condition of serfs, to become attached to the soil, and gradually to be looked upon as an integral part of landed property.

The next grade appears to have been the tenant farmers in the country, and the small tradesmen and mechanics in the cities. That they were comfortably housed, clothed, and fed, enjoying the benefits of stable government, but little affected by the changes in rulers, seem to be well-established facts. It is probable that the tradesmen and artisans, found in great numbers in the great cities, were formed into guilds according to their several trades, for they appear to exert a powerful influence in social life. Above these in the social scale were the rich merchants, bankers, and great landed proprietors, and above all the priesthood and nobility of the land, with the king at their head. The king was chief of the priests, whose power he might be able to guide and use, provided he did not violate the integrity of the cult. The tenure of his office, in theory at least, depended upon his faithful performance of the duties of religion and his equally faithful discharge of his duties as administrator of the laws of the land. He was far from being an absolute monarch. As the adopted son of the supreme deity (Bel-Marduk), he must govern in accordance with the divine prin-

ciples upon which the government was established, as the vicegerent of God upon the earth, and the ceremony of his adoption must be repeated each year. The nobility were the immediate supporters of the sovereign and heads of the bureaucratic administration of affairs. They evidently held their estates from the king by a kind of feudal tenure. They were required to render military service, and to perform personally the business assigned them by the king; to delegate such business was a capital offence.

The revenues for the support of government and the religious establishment, which were indissolubly united, were obtained by various systems of taxation. Surveys were made on the basis of which taxes on landed property were levied; at the city gates customs duties were paid; an excise system and personal and city property contributed their share toward this end, as well as toward the erection of stupendous palaces and temples, canals, and works of public utility.

No business arrangement was valid without a written contract, signed by the parties in the presence of witnesses, whose signatures must appear on the document as such. In

case of dispute the ordinary method of settlement was by arbitration, or before the established court of judges. Professor Goodspeed, in his "History of Babylonia and Assyria," makes use of the following words: "No one can deny that the spectacle of a people in these early times, carrying on their affairs through agreements sanctioned by the state, and settling their quarrels by process of legal procedure is one which arouses surprise, if not admiration, and indicates a conception of civic order full of promise of progress."

The unit in the Babylonian state was the individual, not the family nor the clan. The legal code was based upon the principle of personal responsibility, and all social life was under the guidance and restraint of written law. Every title in order to be valid must be drawn up and attested in legal form; wills and conveyances of every kind must conform to this law. In absence of will all children, girls as well as boys, shared alike the property of their deceased parents. In some cases the sale of inherited land required signature of all members of the family, which seems a

survival from an older life when the family constituted the unit.

The importance of education was understood, and schools, usually attached to the temples, were provided for the training of the young, in which boys and girls shared alike. The text-books, made from clay, that everywhere underlay the country, bear testimony to the care and attention bestowed upon this most essential adjunct of civilization. The indestructible character and innumerable number of these pedagogical books, in common with every other kind of literary production, have preserved to us a knowledge of the attainments of these ancient scholars, and enable us in some measure to appreciate the difficulty of learning the cuneiform syllabary, that from its structure and use necessitated a knowledge of the older Sumerian language. Words written in the ancient form were often used, yet pronounced according to the later Babylonian speech. A vast number of characters had to be learned by heart, each of which had more than one phonetic value, and many, several, which could be used ideographically to express objects and ideas. The cuneiform characters were classified and

named. Dictionaries and grammars were compiled; there were reading-books filled with the standard literature of the country. Historical subjects, exercises tending to bring out the pupil's understanding and appreciation of the works of poets, essayists, historians, and travellers were included in the curriculum of the schools. The science of mathematics and the art of engineering were carefully studied. Agriculture also received careful attention, and the unprecedented fruitfulness of the land was due largely to the knowledge and training received at these schools. Neither were legal and business methods neglected. The laws codified by Hammurabi, known as Hammurabi's Code, constituted one of the text-books of the schools even down to the last days of the Assyrian and New Babylonian Empires. Money-lending and banking were among the most lucrative of callings, and were followed by all classes of the population, the highest as well as the lowest. Loans were secured by liens on all kinds of property. Several of the larger cities, especially Babylon, had their large banking firms that in the nature and scope of their operations might be regarded

as the Rothschilds and Morgans of the ancient world. Greed and rapacity, however, were held in check by wholesome and well-administered laws, — well administered because maladministration entailed divine displeasure, which to those ancient kings, who were the adopted sons and representatives of God himself, involved the greatest calamity that could befall them.

It is universally conceded that the social and legal standing of woman in a community determines, more than anything else, the character of its civilization. Equality of the sexes betokens the highest grade of social life, and is a necessity for the highest type of morality. We have been accustomed to regard all Oriental people as steeped in sensualism, as having crude and distorted ideas of woman's place in the social world. The Semites as a race have been credited with this grave defect in their ethics and social practices, and the belief has been intensified by the inventions of the early Greek travellers and historians, who grossly misrepresented the moral standards of the Assyrio-Babylonian people. Their seemingly vicious statements, however, have been abundantly refuted by

contemporaneous records, and it is with pleasure that in this analysis we can make the broad and provable statement, that woman under the ancient régime stood in popular esteem and before the law upon an equality with man, and that this condition existed from the earliest known period to the extinction of this grand old civilization.

Woman could hold property; the property she possessed, the personality it represented, belonged to herself alone. She could engage in business on her own account independently of her husband, buy, sell, and transfer property; in short, do anything in a business way a man might do. In marrying, it was the universal custom, except in rare cases where want of means forbade, for the bride's father to provide her with a marriage portion, and the prospective husband must furnish a dowry. The usufruct of these went to the groom, but they remained the absolute property of the wife. In case of divorce all reverted to her, and in certain cases alimony was paid besides. If the bride brought no marriage portion, then on divorce the husband must make provision for her maintenance. Marriage portion and dowry could not be

alienated. These customs, which were also embodied in the laws, served the wife as protection from tyrannical treatment by her husband, and also secured her from fear of divorce. In the earlier days polygamy was permitted, but under such restrictions that it gradually disappeared and was practically unknown during the latter part of the Babylonian supremacy. Marriage was valid only when a contract legally drawn, and duly signed and witnessed, had been executed by the contracting parties. Besides this some ceremony of a religious nature was performed.

There was an entire absence of stone in the alluvial plain that constitutes Babylonia proper, and, as wood was also a meagre product, the fig and palm being the only trees that attained any size, and these only by cultivation, the inhabitants were obliged to look for other material than stone or wood with which to construct their buildings. This they found in the clay that everywhere underlay the soil of the country. Babylonia was a land of brick, either sun-dried or burned with fire, and as the latter method required considerable fuel, only the temples and pal-

aces of the king and nobility were constructed of this material, and of these only the outer casings. The common people had to be content with dwellings whose walls were made of the sun-dried variety, which the fierce rays of the summer sun baked to a degree of hardness that offered considerable resistance to the disintegrating power of the elements. Still, they required continual attention and frequent repairs. The roofs were made of wood supported by stems of the palm, which in time became the pattern for early columnar architecture. The buildings were square or rectangular, with little or no attempt at external ornamentation by columns, pilasters, entablature, cornice, or projecting decorations of any kind, except that the larger buildings were buttressed. The outer walls were, however, covered with a plaster or stucco which was usually painted in rich and brilliant colors.

The marshy soil of Babylonia rendered it necessary that the buildings should be above the ordinary level, consequently a mound was first prepared upon which to build. In most cases, however, the remains of former habitations furnished the mound, so that in excavating the ruins at the present day the

remains of many generations are found piled one above another. The foundations of the temples for the same cause, whenever rebuilt, were raised to higher levels, the débris of the older structures being buried beneath the new. From an inscription of Nabuna'id, a king of the New Babylonian Empire, we learn that in rebuilding the temple of Shamash (*i. e.* the Sun), at Sippar, he unearthed the foundation-stone of Naram Sin, which had not been found by any of the many kings who had made repairs upon this temple for thirty-two hundred years before his time. This inscription is valuable for two reasons: first, because it fixes the date of Naram Sin, who was a son of Sargon of Agade, at 3750 B. C., and second, because it indicates the great age and permanent character of the Babylonian religion.

The temples were square or rectangular in shape, enclosing an open court. On one side rose the ziggurat, or temple proper, from two to seven stories in height, each succeeding story, or stage, being considerably smaller than the one below it. This gave to the building a terraced appearance. These stages did not rise from the centre of their base, but

were placed near a corner; the topmost one was the shrine of the god and was devoted to the ceremonies of worship. The priesthood and votaries had their apartments in the lower stories and in buildings about the court, in which were also rooms for school purposes, with libraries and archives for the safe-keeping of both public and private documents and records.

The interiors of the temples were decorated with mural paintings, in which were portrayed scenes taken from the mythological lore of the country. The contests of the gods of order with the dæmons of chaos; incidents related in the creation epic; the journey and labors of Gilgamesh; and the descent of Ishtar into the regions of the dead, were subjects that claimed the attention and awakened a spirit of devotion in the worshipper at the shrine of the god. Gold and silver, bronze and ivory were used to ornament these interiors. The images of the gods and the sacred chests (arks) were loaded with precious metals, priceless gems, and the most costly fabrics that could be produced, just as to-day churches and altars are ornamented, and images of the saints decorated.

Although Babylonia was an ideal country for agriculture, and there are no records to show that in the long period of its existence as a distinct nation there was ever any famine or want, still it was essentially a land of trades, manufactures, and commerce. Skilled labor produced the most beautiful and costly fabrics from silks, wools, and cottons that the world has ever seen. The work of their lapidaries and metal-workers was unsurpassed by any subsequent age. Up to the sixteenth century B. C. iron appears to have been unknown; and before the age of Sargon, B. C. 3800, there is no indication of bronze. Yet from copper, which they obtained principally from the Sinaitic Peninsula, their arms and utensils were made and tempered to cut the hardest stone quite as effectively as the steel of the present day. The shoes and saddles of Babylonia were celebrated throughout the world, and the skill shown in the manufactures of leather has not been excelled by any modern people. Carving in ivory was a trade, and specimens found in the ruins of Nineveh show an elegance and beauty in design and finish that modern skill can hardly imitate. Chairs, couches, and

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household furnishings were inlaid with this costly material in intricate and curious patterns. Gold and silver smiths showed a high degree of proficiency in the manufacture of jewelry. Articles of daily use in the houses, such as knives, bowls, dishes, and tools, were made of copper or bronze, which from prices paid appear to have been classed with the precious metals. Of course the poorer classes had to be content with pottery, for which Babylonia was justly celebrated. This branch of industry included the manufacture of porcelain, from which innumerable articles of daily use were made, besides many objects of curious and beautiful design intended for ornamental purposes.

The tiles that lined the walls of Babylonian and Assyrian palaces and temples, in beautiful and artistic designs, were the work of these tradesmen. They were made from the clay of the land, done in bright colors and covered by a metallic glaze that placed them among the finest and most enduring products of human skill.

Brickmaking was one of the most useful and necessary trades of the country, for brick was the foundation of their architecture. A

branch of this industry was the manufacture of the tablets upon which the literature was incised. Stamps were often prepared, by means of which texts and official documents that required duplication could be reproduced indefinitely. Thus the printing of our own day was foreshadowed.

The carpenter was also a necessary member of the community. While wood was not plentiful, and much had to be brought from long distances, yet doors and panels for the better houses of the people required skill and taste in their manufacture and fitting. The carpenter's trade, however, was not confined to this work. From the earliest times he was a skilful builder of household furniture, which was often of a highly artistic character.

The vintner also plied his trade as manufacturer of wine and beer. The former was made from dates as well as grapes, while the latter was produced from cereals. The consumption of these products seems to have been large and the price small. A notable feature of the industrial situation was that every tradesman was obliged to warrant his goods, and any imperfection in material or workmanship was punished with heavy fines.

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The geographical position of Babylonia was of immense advantage and a most important factor in the development of her commercial supremacy. It was through her borders that the traffic between the important and wealthy nations of Arabia, Egypt, and the Mediterranean coasts, and the populations of Central and Eastern Asia must pass. Babylon thus early became a centre from which radiated streams of trade both by land and sea, distributing the products of the civilized world and opening markets for those distinctly her own. The broadening and civilizing influence which contact with foreign people, foreign customs, and foreign thought would exert, must inevitably have left its mark upon Babylonian character. It was by means of this commercial intercourse also that Babylonian culture was disseminated throughout Western Asia. The conquering armies of Akkad and Shumer, nearly forty-five centuries before our era, had made tributaries of the people of Mesopotamia and the Upper Euphrates, together with the Mediterranean countries from the Issus to Egypt; a dominion that with few interruptions continued for nearly twenty-five hun-

dred years; but it was the civilizing and broadening effects of trade that promoted amicable relations, contributed toward cosmopolitan habits of thought, and stimulated a literary activity, the magnitude of which has been revealed by the copious correspondence which has been unearthed both in Babylonia and Egypt. The Tel El Amarna tablets are a revelation, not only of the facility with which communication was maintained between the different cities and states of the ancient world, but also of the political, civil, and industrial conditions in ancient Canaan prior to the advent of the Israelitish people. It was a land whose institutions, civil and religious, — whose language even, — was Babylonian. Between the twenty-fifth and fifteenth centuries B. C., the period of the Amorite occupancy, the land was filled with a population living in large and well-appointed towns and cities, many enjoying the rights of local autonomy. Parts of the open country, suitable for agricultural purposes or grazing, were thickly settled, and it is probable that at no subsequent period was the land equally productive or well-peopled.

The fact that Babylonia was for the greater

part of several millenniums the fountain head from which was drawn the civilization of all Western Asia has been but little understood. Recent discoveries show that from the lower to the upper sea, *i. e.* from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, the people were not only Semites, but they held a common stock of political, social, and religious ideas; their institutions, manners, customs, dress, habits, language, literature, gods, and worship were identical. The early Akkadian kings as far back as the fifth millennium B. C. among their titles claimed to be Kings of Martu, sovereigns of all the west from the lower to the upper sea, and in their inscriptions they enumerate the products of these lands as among the many and valued resources at their command. The merchant with his wares, the courier with his clay tablet inscribed with the message he was to deliver, passed in safety through this large domain, showing that there must have been a responsible government and a highly civilized condition of affairs.

In theory Babylonia was a theocracy. Before the unification of the city-states as a united people under the supremacy of Babylon, with Bel-Marduk as supreme god, the

high priest of the local cult for each city exercised both civil and religious authority. He was king as well as priest, but the powers which the priest-king exercised were delegated powers. This belief obtained a firm footing in the country from the earliest times, and crystallized in the forms and ceremonies of the later Babylonian religion. The sovereign was pontiff first and king afterward; the legality of his authority dated from and depended upon his adoption by Bel to sonship, and once every year he must take the hands of his god and renew the pact which made him vicegerent and representative of Bel upon earth. Many were the observances and tabus entailed by his position, which were constant reminders of his relationship and of the delegated nature of his office. Some of the earlier kings attempted to make this relationship a nearer one by claiming the god as their father by a human mother. Some even claimed to be the incarnation of the gods themselves. With the accession of the Kassites in the twentieth century B. C. this claim of divinity disappeared, and sonship by adoption became the legitimate method of establishing the right to the throne. This right to govern in tem-

poral affairs, like that claimed by the Catholic Church, included the habitable earth, for Bel-Marduk was supreme god of the Universe.

The relations of Assyria to Babylonia were those of child to parent. The shrines and temples of the mother country were venerated and received the fostering care of the Assyrian monarchs even when the two people were arrayed against each other in war. It was the ambition of the northern empire to become the dominant power in Babylonia, not so much as conquerors and masters, but as heirs and sharers in the time-honored traditions and the wealth of historic memories which clustered around that ancient cradle of civilization. An offshoot from the same stem, they showed such a regard for the older nation, with its unsurpassed skill, polished manners, and refined methods of living, that they slavishly copied Babylonian art, science, and literature. In a country abounding in stone, from which the most durable building material might be obtained, where the raised mound was a superfluity, they built their temples and palaces of brick, after the Babylonian pattern, upon raised platforms, and

decorated them with the same kind of ornamentation.

The genius and spirit of the people, however, were widely different. While the Babylonians were engaged in peaceful pursuits, happy and prosperous in the conquests of industry and trade, the Assyrians were of warlike disposition, eager for the excitements and spoils of war. They were more hardy and less intellectual than their southern kinsmen. The gods of Babylonia were their gods, only they occupied a subordinate position in their pantheon. Their supreme deity, as far above all others as Jehovah was above the archangels, was Asher. If Christianity is a monotheistic belief, theirs certainly was. Asher stood alone, without consort or son, the embodiment of every attribute that filled the ancient conception of divinity, but more especially did he represent the Assyrian state. This was the body of which he was the soul. His name was above all names, for in it, as it seemed to them, resided the potent and mysterious power that made their armies invincible and their national prestige as enduring as old earth itself.

When we come to the consideration of the

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religion of Babylonia we find the priesthood fully installed as the controlling power in the land. Although the people were intensely practical and busy with the material concerns of life, still all their varied activities were expressed in the terms of religion. The priests were the judges, scribes, and authors; the makers and expounders of the law; the conservators of literature, science, and art. The growth and expansion of knowledge depended upon their researches instituted for the purpose of ascertaining the divine will. Hence we may expect distorted views of nature, and conventionalism in literature, art, and architecture. This religion was polytheism of the most pronounced type, still we have only to look beneath the surface a little to see that the gulf which separates it from monotheism is more imaginary than real, — due to our own misconceptions.

The religious sense in man fully accounts for an innate belief in divine personality, — the efficient cause of all things, — and that this personality is especially concerned in the welfare and happiness of man, to whom under certain conditions it condescends to reveal itself and enter into communion with.

The outward forms by which this belief is expressed, and the conception of how divine personality manifests itself, whether as one being in whom resides all power, the source and sustainer of all the diversified activities of the universe, employing divine and human agents for the execution of his purposes, or, as a separate personality for each and every class of phenomena, subject to and dependent on a supreme first cause, have absolutely nothing to do with spiritual life and growth. The same feelings of dependence, worship, gratitude, thanksgiving, and praise are awakened by contemplation of divinity, whether embodied in one, three, or a hundred forms. The polytheistic cults of Babylonia and the monotheistic cult of Judaism had so much in common that it is certain that Judaism, which is much the later system, drew and applied the essentials of its worship from Babylonian sources. Their cosmological ideas, the forms and ceremonies of their religion, the organization of their priesthood, temple service, and Levitical canon is Babylonian from beginning to end.

We know that the early beginnings of civilized life in Babylonia, like the early be-

ginnings of civilized life everywhere, were hedged about by the forms and ceremonies of religion, but more especially by the tabu, that most powerful accessory to the doctrine of faith in all religions. By its means independent inquiry into the meaning and object, the reason and authority for priestly assertion regarding divine things, was most effectually stopped. In our own day its influence is most potent with a large majority of people.

The religion of Babylonia was, unquestionably, an original expression of that growth — the religious sense — which has culminated in the later religions of the world. It was, so far as we know, the oldest and most widely disseminated of any that had passed the primitive stage and assumed a catholic character, and, while it may have been subjected to modifying influences from contact with surrounding people, yet there is abundant evidence to show that it was by far the largest factor in moulding the religious conceptions, and supplying material for the multitudinous cults that occupied Western Asia, Northern Africa, and Southern Europe from the age of Sargon of Agade (B. C. 3800) down to the establishment of Christianity in the fourth

century of our era, and its effect and influence are easily traceable even in our own day.

The groundwork of this religion is a thinly disguised nature-worship allied to a system of Shamanism. The animism of savage life still persisted in the conceptions of the visible world, but aside from this conscious principle supposed to inhere in all material things, the world was peopled with other spirits, both good and bad, upon whose activities the condition and destiny of man depended. This feature of Babylonian belief was old, reaching back to a time when the well-defined pantheon of later ages existed as a dim and shadowy outline. The Babylonian conception of divinity, like ours of the present day, involved a being, or beings, with illimitable powers. With them it was the sun, moon, stars, — all nature-forces that gave impressions of divinity, on account of their irresistible power and unchanging aspects; and, as the well-being of mankind depended wholly upon a continuance of their beneficent activity, an identification of the spirits of good with the “zi” or animating principle of these natural objects and forces followed as a matter of

course. Thus the good spirits, those helpful to man, grew into gods with well-defined attributes of divinity. As communities developed into cities and states, their gods developed with them until finally, when the people of the entire land became one homogeneous whole, when the national sentiment had become well rooted, a unified conception of divinity pervaded the land, although expressed by a multiplicity of names. We must regard this, however, as the theological aspect of the Babylonian religion, — this was the religion of the state. Beneath this, more intimately connected with the life of the people, was a belief in an innumerable variety of malevolent spirits whose deadly hostility to man could be met only by conjuration, exorcism, and magical rites. All sickness, accident, or misfortune of any kind was due to the malevolence of some demon, who must be driven out by repeating the necessary formula, or by observance of the proper rites, or, as a last resort, by an appeal to the superior power of the higher gods. This of course necessitated the offices of exorcising priests, men versed in the science of magic and incantation. In its later developments this use

of magic to constrain the evil had extended so as to include the great gods themselves, and the efficiency of names as a compelling force became one of the tenets of religion.

The forces of evil were also believed to effect their purposes very largely through the demoniac power possessed by certain human beings. A belief in witches and wizards is as old as the race and as universal, due no doubt to abnormal appearance in some cases, but more especially to abnormal faculties that certain persons unquestionably possess. These were regarded in ancient times with the same distrust and aversion that has marked the feeling and conduct of mankind ever since toward people physically deformed or mentally unsound, or those who by keenness of intellect or superior sagacity have been able to accomplish marvellous results. These have ever been associated with the idea of sorcery, and regarded as the incarnation of demoniac power on earth. They could do everything that demons could do, and more, for they possessed control over the demons. They possessed the evil eye (a suggestion of hypnotism); they could put a person under a spell by means of the evil word; they com-

pounded magical potions for those whom they desired to punish. It was thought that one of the most effective means of afflicting humanity was by sympathetic magic. That by their diabolic power they could, by tying knots in a rope and repeating certain words, strangle their absent victim, or, by making his image of clay, pitch, or any soft material, and burning or mutilating it, they could cause the victim to experience the pains and injuries this symbolism suggested. Under such conditions it is easy to see that the life of one so unfortunate as to have a marked peculiarity would hardly have been worth the living had it not been for a wise provision in the Babylonian law which made it a capital offence to falsely accuse any one of weaving a spell.

Whatever may be the motive that impels the quest, the first endeavor of religion everywhere is to ascertain the divine will, so that by faithful compliance therewith the objects desired may be attained. With the Babylonian the motive appears to have been wholly of a temporal nature. The hope of a bright and happy hereafter, as the reward of faithful performance of divine commands, did not

constitute an incentive to religious duty. It was the blessings of this life that he craved and for which he offered his tribute to the divinities of his faith. His petitions therefore would emphasize his desire for long life and for earthly benefits, and create a feeling of necessity for some visible token that his prayers were heard. This especially would be the case where matters of public import were at stake. Hence arose the prophetic function of the priesthood, the institution of oracles, and the interpretation of omens and dreams.

In their cosmology the Babylonians did not attempt to explain the genesis of matter. Their conception of the forces that account for the present aspects of the universe was that these forces were the producers of order and systematic development only. In their philosophy the idea that something could be produced from nothing does not appear to have been entertained.

Their animistic views they embodied in the figurative language of early man. The vast yeasty mass of mingled earth, water, and air that formed original chaos, they likened to an enormous dragon or serpent. To this they

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gave two personalities, — Apsu (the great deep) and Tiamat (the monster). The former represented the male, and the latter the female, principle. The first tablet of the creation epic, so far as decipherable, reads as follows:

“There was a time when above the heavens were not named.

Below the earth bore no name.

Apsu was there from the first, the source of both.

And raging Tiamat the mother of both,

But their waters were gathered together in a mass.

No field was marked off, no soil was seen.

When none of the gods was as yet produced,

No name mentioned, no fate determined,

Then were created the gods in their totality.

Lakhmu and Lakhamu were created.

Days went by —

Anshar and Kishar were created.

Many days elapsed —

Anu (Bel and Ea were created).”

These two, Apsu and Tiamat, became the parents of the primeval gods. Lakhmu and his consort, Lakhamu, were produced first, then Anshar and Kishar, and finally Anu, Bel, and Ea; the last three formed the great Babylonian triad. We must not expect consistent and harmonious accounts from the

various sources from which Babylonian myths were derived, for inconsistency and contradiction are distinguishing traits of mythology. From other sources than the one from which we have quoted, it would appear that Lakhmu and Lakhamu were the parents of Anshar and Kishar, who became the parents of the triad, Anu, Bel, and Ea. These last were the gods of order, and dwelt with their parents, Anshar and Kishar, in the space above the regions of Apsu and Tiamat. As the gods of order they sought to establish the universe upon an orderly basis, with a perfect adjustment of all its parts; but the tablets of fate, which constituted their possessor the ruler of the universe, remained in the hands of Tiamat. These she conferred upon Kingu, a creature of her creation, endowed with all the might and venom she was capable of imparting. In order, therefore, that the gods might obtain control, Tiamat and her brood, who represent disorder and confusion, must be met and overcome. In the oldest versions of the creation epic, Bel was the one who engaged in this mighty conflict. He slew the huge monster, and, dividing her remains, he made the firmament of one part and the earth

of the other. Later versions compiled after the rise of Babylon, and the ascendancy of Marduk as the supreme god, make him the hero of the myth. As the son of Bel he became identified with that ancient divinity, and was known as Bel-Marduk.

The victor, however, — Bel, Marduk, or Bel-Marduk, — becomes the possessor of the tablets of fate. By the powers they impart he holds within his hands the fate of gods and men, and by them issues his decrees. It was he who divided the dominion of the universe, giving to Anu the heavens, that region of the fixed stars outside and above the firmament. He gave to Ea the domain of Apsu, that is, the great deep that flows around the outer edge of the earth and upon which the earth floats. For himself he reserved the earth and all things under the firmament. The earth he forms like a mountain, the hemispherical firmament rising above it. Between these two he marks out the courses for the sun, moon, and planets, and animates each with his own divine *zi* (conscious intelligence). Within the body of the earth he placed Sheol, the dark, gloomy, waterless, and dusty abode of the dead. Marduk was not

only maker of heaven and earth, but he was the grand artificer of all things therein contained. As the last and crowning act of his creation, he fashioned the first human pair from clay mixed with his own divine blood. In ancient times blood was the synonym of life, and by this act Marduk may be said to have given his life for the human race. From tablets dating from the age of the New Babylonian Empire, we may learn, as Friedrich Delitzsch informs us, "That all, or, at any rate, the highest deities in the Babylonian pantheon are designated as one with, and one in, the god Marduk."

"The god Nin-ib is Marduk as being Possessor of Power.

"The god Nergal is Marduk as being Lord of the Conflict of Battle.

"The god Bel is Marduk as being Possessor of Lordship (Supreme Lord).

"The god Nebu is Marduk as being God of Industry and Trade.

"The god Sin is Marduk as being Illuminator of the Night.

"The god Samas is Marduk as being God of Day, and Lord of all that is just.

“The god Addu is Marduk as being God of Rain.”

Delitzsch further says: “Marduk accordingly is Nin-ib as well as Nergal, moon-god as well as sun-god, and so on,—the names of Nin-ib and Nergal, Sin and Samas, are simply different ways of describing the one god Marduk; they are all one with him and in him.”

When the Christian addresses his God as a God of Mercy, or a God of Love, or a God of Justice, or as his Heavenly Father, or as the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, he has no thought that by multiplying these titles of honor and regard he is indulging in polytheistic practice. In all probability the ancient Babylonian, of the intelligent class, in his devotions was just as far from any such thought. When we see in our own day the masses paying divine honors to relics and saints, addressing their prayers to the Queen of Heaven, who receives the largest share of worship paid that quaternion which constitutes the Christian's pantheon, should not our criticism of these ancient feelers after God be tempered with Christian charity?

The social instinct in man is a product of

that necessity which compelled him, even before he had reached the human stage, to unite his strength and sagacity with others for mutual protection and support. This union could be possible only as individual rights were recognized and respected. In time there developed a code of conduct in the dealings of individuals with each other, and with the community at large. This gave rise to moral sense, which is nothing more than a general recognition of the fact that whatever rights, benefits, and privileges we hope to have secured to us by our fellow men, we must be willing to secure to them as well. Time and custom, and the universal acceptance of this principle have made it an axiom. As society advances from savage to civilized conditions, this principle develops, and with later and higher forms of religion the deities take on moral attributes; that is, they concern themselves with human conduct that relates to man's treatment of and feeling toward his fellow men. This stage of religious development Babylonia had certainly reached at a very early date in her history, so that we might expect that which the literary remains reveal, that when misfortune or disease overtook a man,

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the first questions asked were: "What sin has he committed?" or "What moral duty has he neglected?" In cases of sickness it was customary for the priest, who was the physician of the body as well as the soul, to ascertain, if possible, if the trouble was not due to withdrawal of divine favor on account of sin. Not only were the larger, more flagrant breaches of moral conduct noted, like murder, theft, adultery, etc., but sins of omission were inquired after. Had he clothed the naked, or fed the hungry? Had he failed to relieve one in distress whom he might have relieved? In short, had he done for another what he would have wished done for himself under similar circumstances? Such inquiries show an appreciation of moral duty not surpassed by the boasted altruism of these later days.

It is in the forms and ceremonies of their worship that we can trace the wide-spread and lasting influence of the Babylonian religion. Their temples, which we have described, were the scenes of continual religious service in which sacrifices were offered, accompanied by a special ritual for each day in the year. There were fasts and feasts for each month, many of which have survived to the present

day in both Jewish and Christian calendars. The Jewish Passover and Christian Easter, while their significance has been perverted and obscured, are but survivals of the Babylonian festival, Zag-muku, derived, unquestionably, from the practice observed in still more ancient times of celebrating with feast and song the vernal equinox. This festival continued through the first eleven days of the month of Nisan, which were also the first eleven days of the new year. On the first day occurred the visit of the god Nabu, from his temple in Borsippa, to that of his father, the god Marduk in Babylon. Nabu thus set the example of homage to Marduk, which all the other gods were supposed to follow during the great festival. The following, from Jastrow's "Babylonian-Assyrian Religion," may be of interest: "The eighth and eleventh days of the festival month were invested with special sanctity. On these days all the gods were brought together in the 'chamber of fates' of Marduk's temple, in symbolical imitation of the assembly of the gods in Ubshu-kenna; Marduk sits on his throne and the gods are represented as standing in humble submission before him while he decrees the fates of man-

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kind for the coming year. The Zag-muku festival in its developed form has striking points of resemblance to the Jewish New Year's day. On this day, according to the popular Jewish tradition, God sits in judgment, with a book before him, in which he inscribes the fate of mankind. Nine days of probation are allowed, and on the tenth day — the day of atonement — the fates are sealed." The other annual Jewish festivals were undoubtedly of Babylonian origin also, although, as with the Passover, the reason for their being was accredited to the commands of Jehovah; yet, no doubt, their incorporation into his cult was due to customs too deeply rooted to be easily eradicated, which had been established in Canaan long before the tribes from which the Jewish nation sprung were in existence.

There was a festival of Babylonian origin, known as the Tammuz festival, celebrated in the month of Tammuz (July). Tammuz was originally a solar deity, the consort of Ishtar. He symbolized the waning power of the sun, the decay and death that follows the shortening of the days from the summer solstice on. The myth contained the elements

of romance and pathos that appealed to the imaginative sensibilities of the West Asian people, and, as far as Babylonian culture and influence extended, this myth in differing forms and names was found. Among the Phoenicians he was known as Adon, in Greece Adonis, but among the Hebrew people he was Tammuz, and, as in Babylonia, so in Palestine, his untimely death was commemorated by a period of mourning, in which dirges were sung by wailing women. People generally remembered their dead, bringing offerings and tokens of love. This mourning was followed by a festival of rejoicing, symbolizing the resurrection of the god.

Other sacred days imposed by religion were the new moons, the seventh, fourteenth, and twenty-first days thereafter, which would correspond with the phases of the moon and also with the days of the month, as the month began with the new moon; the nineteenth was also observed, it being the end of the seventh week from the beginning of the previous month. Professor Sayce, in his "Babylonian and Assyrian Life," says: "On these Sabbaths no work was permitted to be done. The king, it was laid down, 'must not eat

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flesh cooked at the fire or in the smoke; must not change his clothes; must not put on white garments; must not offer sacrifices; must not drive in his chariot or issue royal decrees.' Even the prophet was forbidden to practise augury or give medicine to the sick." In times of public calamity special days of fasting were set apart to be observed as days of humiliation and prayer. In prosperous times days of thanksgiving and praise were observed.

Of the furnishings of the temples we learn that, besides the image of the god which stood in the innermost shrine, or holy of holies, was a coffer or ark. One found in a temple near Nineveh contained two small slabs of marble on which the king in duplicate text records his erection of the sanctuary. Before the shrine was the golden table upon which the showbread was laid, and below it was the mercy-seat, or seat of oracles. From this seat the oracles of the god were delivered by the attending priest. In the temple of Marduk at Babylon, it was upon this seat that Marduk received the assembled gods during the Zag-muku festival. In front of the shrine was an altar; another also stood in the outer

court. These altars were made with projections or horns at the corners. In the outer court was placed a great basin, or the brazen sea, supported upon the heads of twelve bronze oxen facing outward, four looking north, four south, four east, and four west. These basins were supposed to represent the primeval deep out of which the world had arisen and upon which it rests. The temple usually contained an upright stone called Bit-ili or Beth-el; this was consecrated by pouring oil upon it, and it was believed to be animated by a divine spirit. Like the asherahs of the Hebrew sanctuaries, it had a phallic significance.

The offerings to the gods were divided into sacrifices and meal-offerings. Exactly the same distinction was made between clean and unclean animals to be used for sacrificial purposes that we find in the Levitical canon. The ox, sheep, lamb, kid, and dove were offered in sacrifice, and fruit, vegetables, bread, wine, oil, and spices where no blood was required to be shed. There were also sin-offerings, and heave-offerings, where the offering was first "lifted up" before the gods.

The hierarchy of priests was large. Theoretically the king was the chief priest. He was the head of the religious as well as the civil administration of affairs, and in the early life of the people he fully exercised these functions; but as time went on, and kingly cares and duties increased, the burdens of the priestly office were delegated to a class of professional hierophants. These, as the ages rolled by, improved every opportunity to perpetuate and strengthen the enormous power they wielded in the land. They were divided into several classes, each with its chief. In the larger temples the various functions that constitute the priestly office were specialized. There was a class whose duty it was to preside over the sacrifices; a class whose business it was to drive out the demons of disease, or thwart the power of witches and wizards, or ward off the attacks of malevolent spirits. There was a class that could prognosticate the future and ascertain the will of the gods, — necromancers, those versed in augury, divination, omens, and magic generally. Besides these, the priesthood exercised judicial functions; they were the judges, legislators, lawyers, physicians, and scribes. In and about

the temple were orders of servitors, by whom the laborious and menial duties were performed. There were also singers and wailers, *i. e.* professional mourners, of both sexes. There were several classes of votaries, who were persons consecrated to the service of the divinity, often by parents. These votaries were formed into religious societies, residing within the temple and devoted to its service. Such societies were governed by special rules and regulations. We find the parallels of this hierarchical system in the religious institutions of Israel, and in the ecclesiastical constitution of Christianity.

There is a feature of their religion, common to all others in transition from primitive to cultured conditions, that requires attention, not only as a proper understanding of original religions, but because the later composite types show its influence. The undeviating fact that it is only by the union of the male and female principles that life is created so impressed the thinkers of the race that they could not conceive of a being, not even a god, except as having had a father and mother, and beginning existence by being born. There also appeared to them to be a necessity

for a consort and offspring for each of their divinities. These families invariably consisted of three persons, father, wife, and son. The wife was but a pale reflection of her lord; still she stood as an exemplar of wifely devotion and motherly love and tenderness. The son was usually identified with the father in his attributes and general characteristics. Besides these goddesses, in almost all the ancient cults, there were one or more divinities independent of a male companion, to whom in the heavenly hierarchy important duties were assigned. They were peculiarly the guardians of woman and her interests, to whom in the trials and troubles incident to her sex she could go for divine sympathy and help. Such were the Ishtars of Babylonia and Assyria, Ashtoreth in Syria, Cybele in Asia Minor and Crete, Isis in Egypt, and Demeter in Greece and Rome. These were goddesses of fertility, and their jurisdiction extended over both animal and vegetable life. In their temples and cults, ministered by priestesses, were emblems and ceremonies intended to express their mission and their divine power in the propagation of life. They were the promoters of the mother-love,

and the instincts of maternity, — the friends and helpers of their sex.

The Ishtars of Babylonia, through the long period of Babylonian supremacy, assumed a varied rôle ranging from a goddess of impurity to a Minerva-like austerity of morals. In the latter rôle she appears as the Assyrian Ishtar of Arbela. During the reign of Hammurabi she appears as the goddess of war, a character she maintains at times, especially under the Assyrian monarchs. She becomes identified with the older female divinities just as Marduk became identified with Bel, and assumes their various characteristics. In the Gilgamesh epic and the Tammuz myth, she appears in the rôle of goddess of love, through whose charms both men and gods are lured to destruction. In one place she is the daughter of Anu (the heavens), in another the daughter of Sin (the moon). The tendency grew, however, with the age of the country, to group all the female attributes of their pantheon in one supreme goddess, — Ishtar.

So far as known, all the myths that cluster about any and all divine beings, in any and all pantheons, have their origin in man's early

attempt to account for and explain phases of natural phenomena. By far the greater part of these myths were originally solar. The absolute dependence of life, both in inception and development, upon the vital influences that emanate from the sun is apparent to even a low order of intelligence. While yet language could express the activities of nature's forces only in the guise of human figures and experience, man attempted to delineate the course of the sun in his daily and yearly circuit of the heavens. The heavens were mapped and constellations invented whose characters would help explain the various aspects the sun assumed during his yearly course. The zodiac was divided into twelve houses or regions, in passing through which he would encounter the various experiences that account for his weakness and absence of vivifying power while lying low in the south, his gradual return to the higher heavens and his gathering strength, which at the vernal equinox bursts forth with resistless vigor, calling to life the dormant vegetation, and infusing throughout all nature renewed and quickened impulses. This period of active and dominant energy reaches its

zenith at the summer solstice, and the character of his heavenly surroundings emphasizes his majesty, glory, and power. From this time on a gradual decline sets in, the days shorten, his vigor departs, and he sinks again into the dark and gloomy regions of the south. Here he is beset by the zodiacal monsters. He suffers the pain and humiliation that follows the loss of his power, while the demons of storm and winter glory in his downfall. Their triumph, however, is only for a season. At the winter solstice he is born again, and each year sees repeated the history of his divine mission, which is a never-ending struggle for the benefit of mankind.

When a man who had been a leader of his kind, either as an organizer of political power, or to higher and better methods of life and conduct, had passed away, the human tendency of magnifying his exploits would begin to operate, and in time there would be hung about his memory the same draperies that had disguised the real character of the solar god. His parentage would be divine; his birth would be heralded as that of a future deliverer of mankind. The powers of evil (usually represented as a relentless ty-

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rant) would be aware of the danger to their authority that the birth of this deliverer portends, and would seek in various ways to compass his destruction. By his innate divinity he escapes the impending fate and accomplishes his mission. The histories and mythologies of all ancient people are filled with such characters, whose historical bases have been built upon with just such an admixture of fact and myth.

The Gilgamesh Epic in its final shape was written upon twelve tablets; in all about three thousand lines, of which about half, thus far found, are legible. From these it is evident that a blending of the history of an ancient hero with the mythical exploits of the sun have taken place. The birth of this hero portended disaster to his cruel grandfather, Sokaros, and he was thrown from a tower, in which his mother was imprisoned, as soon as he was born. In falling he was caught by an eagle (emblem of the sun) and taken to a gardener, by whom he was reared. (Note the parallel to the story of Cyrus.)

The first tablet opens with the siege of Uruk, a seven-walled city of Southern Babylonia. Gilgamesh, the irresistible hero, ap-

pears to be the besieger. The inhabitants, hard pressed, appeal to Aruru, the goddess of life, identified with Ishtar, who was the patron divinity of Uruk, where her temple and worship continued to the last days of Babylonian rule. She hears the prayer, and creates from a bit of clay a hero, a being human, but seeming like a god. This man is described as being covered with hair, living and feeding with the cattle of the field. It is evident that the description was intended to recall man living in a savage state, perhaps a dim recollection of some savage people whose assistance the people of Uruk had hoped to gain. Gilgamesh frustrates the plan of the goddess. This he does by means of Ukhat, one of the devotees of Ishtar. She appears before Eabani (the new creation of the goddess), and by her charms captivates his heart and lures him from his wild and beastly life. She becomes his companion, — his Eve. She brings him to Gilgamesh, with whom a lasting friendship is formed. Together they enter upon a career of conquest which terminates in the capture of the fortress of Khumbaba and the death of its cruel master, who was their most formidable enemy.

This fortress was situated in a beautiful garden, in the midst of which grew a large, majestic tree (a Babylonian symbol of knowledge), affording a delightful shade and diffusing a sweet odor. Here Eabani and Ukhat take up their abode.

Thus far the epic appears to be a mixture of probable history and myth. The patron god of Gilgamesh was Shamash, *i. e.* the sun, and there is no doubt that the first six tablets, which contain the story of the labors and difficulties of Gilgamesh in his wars, his rise from weak and feeble state to a great and powerful conqueror, was intended to symbolize the ascent of the sun from his weak and feeble condition in winter to his glorious and powerful ascendancy at the summer solstice. The episode of Eabani and Ukhat introduces another element, evidently intended to illustrate the elevating and civilizing influences which connubial relations exert in the institution of home and family.

With the sixth tablet the mythological element becomes more marked. The goddess Ishtar, attracted by the achievements and personality of Gilgamesh, tries by her arts and blandishments and promises of earthly pos-

sessions to win his love. He scorns her proposals and accuses her of fickleness and cruelty. As giver of life she presents that inestimable gift only that she may satisfy her cruel nature by depriving her creatures of it. He reminds her of Tammuz, the consort of her youth, whom she causes to weep every year; the bright-colored allallu bird whose pinions she has broken; the lion of perfect strength, whom seven and seven times (again and again) she buried in the corners; the horse whom she urged on with whip and spur when wearied and thirsty; of cruel treatment to the shepherds; and of changing a giant into a dwarf, — all of which typifies the decaying vegetation of the waning year and the loss of vigor and youthful beauty that comes with advancing age. Ishtar, scorned and insulted, flies to her father Anu, the god of heaven, and relates her treatment. Anu comforts her, and at her request creates a divine bull, known as Alu, *i. e.* the strong or supreme one, who is commissioned to destroy Gilgamesh. The hero and his friend, Eabani, succeed in despatching the bull. The bull in Babylonian mythology is a symbol of storm. Gilgamesh, as representative of the sun, tri-

umphs over the storm sent by Anu; but this triumph, which marks the passage of the summer solstice, is his last great triumph. His friend Eabani sickens and dies. Ishtar, mindful of her revenge, takes away the life she had created, and as the year advances she begins the process of undermining the vital powers of Gilgamesh himself. His strength diminishes and he feels the approach of dissolution, — the fate of Eabani stares him in the face. In the ninth tablet, which corresponds with the ninth month, he determines to seek the only human being that has obtained immortal life. At the confluence of the streams dwells Parnapishtim, the son of Kidin-Marduk, the only one of human kind to whom a never-dying existence has been granted. The road to the place is full of danger, but Gilgamesh, undaunted, undertakes the journey. Of this journey, the tablet makes him say:

“I came to a glen at night
 Lions I saw and was afraid.
 I raised my head and prayed to Sin (The Moon),
 To the leader (?) of the gods my prayer came,
 (He heard my prayer [?]), and was gracious to me.”

On many seal cylinders and on monuments, Gilgamesh is pictured in the act of fighting with, or strangling a lion. He finally reaches the gates through which the sun passes, and after a journey of twenty-four hours through darkness and peril, he reaches the sea. Here his way seems stopped, but after more difficulties and dangers he succeeds in arranging with Ardi-Ea (servant of Ea) for a passage across, and at last stands before Parnapishtim. He tells his story, and in answer to his anxious query Parnapishtim tells the story of his own escape from the universal law of death. This story is contained in the eleventh tablet, known as the deluge tablet. This corresponds with the eleventh month of the year, the month of storm and tempest. The story he tells is the same in all essential particulars as that of Noah and the flood, found in the Hebrew Scriptures, except that Parnapishtim, the Babylonian Noah, and his wife are made immortal. Gilgamesh remains for a time with these people, and is healed of his disease by a magic potion prepared by Parnapishtim's wife, and by immersion in the fountain of life. Before he departs, Parnapishtim, at the suggestion of his wife, reveals to

him "the secret of life." It is a wonderful plant possessing the power of restoring youth to old age. Then follows an account of the search of Gilgamesh for this life-giving plant. After many difficulties and dangers he succeeds in finding it growing at the bottom of a fountain. He reaches out and plucks it, but it is instantly snatched away by a demon in the form of a serpent, and he is overcome with grief and despair. He realizes the futility of hoping for aught outside the present life. There remains nothing for him but to return to Uruk.

The twelfth tablet deals with the wanderings of Gilgamesh among the various temples of the land, lamenting for Eabani and praying the gods to grant him at least a sight of his friend. Finally Nergal, lord of the underworld, consents.

". . . He opened the earth
And the spirit of Eabani
He caused to rise like a wind."

Gilgamesh then puts his question to Eabani:

"Tell me my companion, tell me my companion,
The nature of the land which thou hast experienced,
oh! tell me."

Eabani replies:

“I cannot tell thee, my friend, I cannot tell thee!”

Still, he reveals glimpses of the sad conditions that prevail there. It is the domain of the terrible Allatu and her consort, the god Nergal. Beneath their throne is the fountain of life, always jealously guarded. Eabani bewails his fate, and curses Ukhat, whom he regards as having brought the calamity of death upon him. By yielding to her allurements he had incurred the enmity of Ishtar, the author of his life. She had made him from clay and to clay he had returned. This calls to mind another, against whom the doom of death was pronounced on account of yielding to temptation for a woman's sake, and the wording of his sentence, — “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

The Babylonians, in common with all early people, could not conceive of a life once begun ever becoming extinct. Death was a passage to another kind of life, from which all that makes life worth living had been extracted. Like bats, the inhabitants of the nether world flit about aimlessly and joylessly, their voices like the twittering of birds, their substance

like shadows, uncertain and elusive. Imprisoned within the carefully guarded boundaries of the seven-walled Aralu, from which there was no escape, — no hope, — this was the theological view of death. The popular view was different. With the masses the spirits of the departed were active and potent factors in the lives and concerns of the living. They possessed the power of forecasting future events, and unless their bodies were carefully buried, and food and water supplied, they became malignant and dangerous foes to mankind. Still, this gloomy fate does not apply to all. Those who meet their death on the field of battle seem to enjoy special privileges, provided they are properly buried, and in their last hours are made comfortable. The spirit of such an one is at rest. But he whose corpse remains in the field unburied, his spirit has no rest; he wanders about the earth consumed by a gnawing hunger, by a longing for food.

The epic, in its latest developments, voices the pessimistic thoughts and views of the later Babylonian philosophers. Man can reach old age, he may be snatched for a time from death, but he only deludes himself by indulg-

ing in hopes of immortal life. The following from Jastrow's "Babylonian-Assyrian Religion" may be of interest: "Gilgamesh becomes a solar deity, and it is hardly accidental that Samson, or, to give the Hebrew form of the name, Shimshon, is a variant form of Shamash, — the name of the sun in 'Babylonian and Hebrew. The Biblical Samson appears to be modelled upon the character of Gilgamesh. Both are heroes, both conquerors, both strangle a lion, and both are wooed by a woman, the one Delila, the other Ishtar, and both through woman are shorn of their strength. The historical traits are of course different." The similarity of these incidents with those told of Hercules show that Oriental influences were potent in moulding the Greek tale.

The mission of Ishtar, found among the remains of Babylonian literature, furnishes us with a further illustration of how life after death was regarded by the people. The myth was a nature myth, intended to symbolize the changes of the seasons. Ishtar as goddess of fertility, the one who produces and matures vegetation in spring and summer, is also the one who brings about decline and death in

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autumn and winter. The sun, her consort, is symbolized by Tammuz, whose waning powers and their final extinction in the latter part of the year are due to Ishtar's fickle and cruel nature. But when he has gone, her love returns, and, repentant, she seeks him in the lower world. The tablets describe her journey through the seven zones that surround Aralu. At the gate of each she must leave some article of clothing, so that she appears naked before the terrible Allatu, a reminder of the general nakedness of nature in winter. The description is the description of a grave. The dead are helpless and inactive, for they have no motive for activity; it is a land of neglect and decay. While the dead can speak, they talk in whispers only. They are weak, and unless others attend to their wants, they suffer the pangs of hunger, or must feed upon clay, from which their bodies were formed and to which they must return.

The ease with which birds move from place to place, in seeming violation of nature's law, that things possessing weight, if unsupported, must fall to the ground, suggested to the ancient thinkers that birds must be the abode in which the human soul, released by death,

found refuge. These speculations bear fruitage in the wings that have been supplied by later concepts to divine beings and the spirits of the departed. In the Ishtar narration, the dead appear in the form of birds, which, when disturbed, flit about, as described in the Gilgamesh epic, in an aimless way like bats.

Ishtar's absence brings calamity to the earth, and engages the attention of the gods. Productivity has ceased and decay set in. It is by Ea that a messenger is sent demanding the release of Ishtar and the restoration of Tammuz. With their return, the sun is born again and the cycle of the year once more begins.

The great gods were gods of the living. The prayers for release from death, and grateful pæans in which Marduk, or Shammash, or Sin, or any member of the pantheon is addressed as restorer to life, etc., are applicable only to cases where death has been imminent but has not actually taken place. When death occurs, the soul has passed beyond their domain and entered that of Nergal and Allatu, who are the heads of another pantheon. Nergal appears as one of the heavenly gods, but in that capacity he was

the god of wrath and destruction. He symbolizes the sun at its greatest height, just after the summer solstice, when his fierce rays wither and destroy the tender vegetation, and turn the fields sear and brown. His symbol was the lion, and under his direction the demons of pestilence and all manner of diseases wrought their work. His attendants were heat, lightning, disease, and death.

These ancient conceptions of an after-life contain the same vagueness and uncertainty that characterize all speculation regarding the future. At the present day there is no well-defined, consistent belief in an existence after the dissolution of this material body. There is a universal feeling that some kind of life awaits us as we pass to the great beyond, but in almost every instance the conception is built entirely upon our experiences that have come to us (as all experience must) through the medium of our senses, — experiences impossible without the physical bases of body and organs.

The beliefs of the ancient Babylonians regarding a future life show just the same inconsistencies we should find should we attempt to analyze modern views upon the same

subject. The Babylonian dead were immured within a prison from which there was no escape, yet they were thought to occupy the bodies of birds, to be upon the earth, comforted and made happy by the attention of friends, or else as malevolent beings working ill to mankind. They were pictured as weak and inactive, — both mental and physical powers at lowest ebb, — and again they could foretell future events, and give strength and vigor to human endeavor. Necromancy (communicating with the dead) was one of the functions of the Babylonian priesthood. When we look over modern beliefs regarding a future state, we find the theologic doctrines contemplate an Aralu, with the gloom and horror intensified by the addition of indescribable tortures for the wicked. Here their souls are imprisoned with no hope of escape. On the other hand the souls of the pious are admitted to the presence of God and the enjoyment of the society of the blessed. Popular beliefs, however, are as little in line with these doctrines as the popular beliefs of ancient times were in line with ancient theology. There is an almost universal feeling that our departed friends, regardless of their

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moral or religious standing while living, are with us, that they feel for us, and often, by a strange, mysterious telepathy, make their comforting presence known.

The myth of Dibbarra, identified with Nergal, the solar god of the summer solstice, to whose destructive powers we have alluded, is believed to be based upon the career of a historical personage. Dibbarra was evidently king of some Akkadian or Sumerian state, who stirred up a general war in which not only the cities of Babylonia were engaged but surrounding nations were also involved. Babylon and Uruk were among the captured cities. This must have occurred prior to the age of Hammurabi, to whom the legend alludes as the Akkadian, the Messiah who will appease the wrath of Dibbarra and inaugurate an era of peace. Here we have the original conceptions that found their way into the later prophecies of both Hebrew and Christian writers, of a general warfare that was to precede a golden age of peace.

The Zu legend is a variant account of the manner in which Marduk came to be the possessor of the tablets of fate from that given in the Gilgamesh epic. It was En-lil, or Bel,

the father of Marduk, who conquered Tiamat and snatched the tablets from the breast of Kingu. These in turn were snatched from Bel by Zu, the god of storm, and carried to his nest in an inaccessible mountain. It was the achievement of Marduk to recover these, thus establishing his right to the headship of the Babylonian pantheon.

The Etana legend, like that of Gilgamesh, was intended to show the utter futility of attempting an escape from death.

The sacred books of the Babylonians, those containing the prayers and hymns as well as the incantations and magical formulas, were written in the ancient Sumerian language, and therefore beyond the reach of the masses. Only the priests and the educated classes were able to read them. In this respect the Sumerian tongue stood to the Babylonian cultus much as the Latin does to the Church of Rome at the present day. Besides these ritualistic compositions, usually employed in man's behalf by the priest, man himself often addressed the deities immediately, deprecating their wrath or imploring their favor. It is by what has been found of these supplications and laudations, that we get a view of

the spiritual attitude of these ancient worshippers. It shows that there has been but little change in man's devotional nature. He asked for what he wanted then just as he does now, and employed practically the same words in preferring his requests. He ascribed to the divinity whom he addressed the attributes of perfect wisdom, power, love, mercy, and justice, a perfect confidence in his protecting care, a desire for spiritual union with him, and professed a regard far above that of any earthly object, just as worshippers do to-day. What could be more monotheistic than the following, said by Sayce to belong to a hymn addressed to Sin, the moon-god, originally composed for the services in his temple at Ur, probably more than two thousand years before the age of Abraham.

“Father long-suffering and full of forgiveness, whose
hand upholdeth the life of all mankind!
First born omnipotent, whose heart is immensity, and
there is none who may fathom it!
In heaven who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme!
On earth who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme!
As for thee, thy will is made known in heaven, and
angels bow their faces.
As for thee, thy will is made known upon earth, and
the spirits below kiss the ground.”

The same author says: "The prayers of Nebuchadnezzar are proof how narrow was the line which divided his faith from that of the monotheist." Nebuchadnezzar says: "I prayed" (to Marduk), "I began to him my petition; the word of my heart sought him, and I said: O prince, thou that art from everlasting, lord of all that exists, for the king whom thou lovest, whom thou hast called by name, as it seems good unto thee, thou guidest his name aright, thou watchest over him in the path of righteousness! I the prince who obeys thee, am the work of thy hands; thou hast created me and entrusted to me the sovereignty over multitudes of men, according to thy goodness, O Lord, which thou hast made me to pass over them all. Let me love thy supreme lordship, let the fear of thy divinity exist in my heart, and give what seemeth good unto thee, since thou maintainest my life."

Our author, from whom this translation was taken, makes the comment: "The man who could thus pray was not far from the kingdom of God."

JEWISH RELIGION



I

THE LAND OF CANAAN

To the people of the Western nations this title stands as a synonym for both an earthly paradise in the past and a heavenly one in the future. It calls to mind a country, fertile and pleasant beyond description, whose inhabitants were the especial favorites of heaven; and it also calls to mind that celestial country where want, weariness, and worry never come, and where peace, plenty, and happy contentment forever abide. Its interest to us centres around these conceptions; for within the borders of the earthly domain, now restricted to modern Palestine, appeared a religion that has overspread the western half of the world, and has been a powerfully modifying factor in the development of Western civilization.

The ancient and original significance of this title was wholly of a terrestrial nature, and the Canaan of antiquity covered a vastly

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larger tract of country than the happy land to which this name has been applied in modern times. Its age is very great, reaching back at least into the fifth millennium before our era. At that remote period it designated a region whose boundaries were roughly defined by the Taurus Mountains on the north, the Arabian Desert on the east, the River of Egypt on the south, and the Mediterranean Sea on the west. At no period of its history, however, could this vast tract be called a homogeneous country, either politically or ethnologically; it was rather a designation for that portion of the Sumerian Empire included within these bounds, which, although divided into numerous small communities by geographical limitations, collectively owed allegiance to that power which held sway in the lower half of the Euphrates valley.

From information gained by modern research we now know that the traditional history of early Canaan is correct in hardly a single particular. Whatever race may have been the original dwellers on this sacred soil, it is certain that no knowledge remains of anything but of its Semitic inhabitants. That the ancient Canaanites, prior to the advent

of the Hebrew people, were of Semitic stock, and had been for more than three thousand years, is among the certainties of the past.

Arabia may be justly regarded as the mother of the Semitic nations, and from her border, at intervals of something like a thousand years, have flowed human inundations that have covered surrounding countries. The present age about completes one of these cycles, and evidences of unrest betokening an upheaval are already in the air. In the seventh century of our era occurred the wave that swept everything before it in the conquests of Islam. In the fourth and fifth centuries B. C. the rise of the Nabatæan and Minæan powers in Southern Palestine and Western Arabia, and the consequent expansion of the Arabic people and influence is a matter of history. A thousand years earlier (B. C. 1500) saw the Aramean inundation, a part of which were the Hebrew tribes. A thousand years earlier still the Amoritic overflow took place, and distinct traces of at least two millennial eruptions are found prior to the Amoritic invasion.

It is the purpose of this work to outline, briefly as possible, the story of the religion

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of Israel in the light of what is definitely known, or, at least, what is reasonably certain. That Israel was a part of that inundation known as the Aramean, that began its inflow during the fifteenth century B. C., is now regarded as certain. From the Tel El Amarna tablets we possess authentic data from which we may form many reliable conclusions regarding the condition of the country politically and socially at that period. We are made fully acquainted with the fact that for three hundred years prior to this invasion Canaan had been subjected to the dominion of Egypt. That for thousands of years prior to Egyptian domination the power that had its centre and seat in the Babylonian plain exercised a controlling influence over the land; that the manners, customs, language, literature, art, and religion were all Babylonian, so much so that even these tablets, which were communications between the Egyptian kings and their officials in Canaan and Syria, were written in Babylonian language and script.

By Hebrew is meant not only the Israelitish branch, but all the Abrahamic tribes of which Israel is a later offshoot. The Abra-

hamic tribes were undoubtedly among some of the earlier waves of the Aramean influx that found a home in Southern Palestine near the wilderness of Sin. Ur of the Chaldees was the seat of the worship of the moon-god Sin, and from this fact, it is probable, arose the tradition that the eponym of these tribes had migrated from that distant city. Other traditions, worthier of credence because more in accord with the known trend of the Aramean inflow, place the initial point of this migration at Haran, which is near the northern end of the Arabian desert. As wave after wave of this inundation ebbed and flowed over the land, sometimes exterminating, sometimes displacing, but more times amalgamating with the older inhabitants, a process of nation-building was inaugurated which finally developed into the kingdom of Israel. The stock was all Semitic, but the newcomers brought little with them besides the healthful vigor of newer blood. They found the country in the fertile valleys, and on the rich alluvial plains, well peopled, with hundreds of cities and towns scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land. But centuries of subjection to foreign masters had

had the inevitable effect of eliminating pride of race and love of country, and impairing their ability for defence, which under other circumstances might have enabled them, civilized and cultured as they are known to have been, to have resisted the onslaught of the wild and barbarous tribes of the desert. As it was, the walls and fortifications of the cities and towns presented formidable barriers to the Hebrew advance, thus protracting the period of the conquest, and aiding very materially in the gradual, and what at last became the complete incorporation of the original Canaanites into the body politic of Israel.

While the Abrahamic wave settled on the borders of Southern Palestine, pushed there, no doubt, by pressure from behind, another left its burden to the east, around the shores of the Dead Sea and in the lower Jordan valley. Its eponym was Lot, — because this people occupied the territory to which the Egyptians had from a remote period given the name of Loten, or Ruten, a word that in Hebrew suggested incest; from this cause the eponyms of these tribes, Moab and Ammon, are represented as being the fruit of incest. Of other branches of the Abrahamic

group, the Ishmael and Hagar tribes also found homes to the eastward around Mount Seir, and became allied with the Bedaway tribes that roamed through the great Syrian desert. To the southeast of the Dead Sea, around Mount Hor, among the mountains and valleys of the northern part of the Sinaitic peninsula, the Keturah tribes established themselves, and were known in later times as Midianites, their eponym being Midian, represented in Hebrew Scriptures as one of the sons of Abraham by his wife Keturah. Isaac fades in the dim perspective. His name, associated with the shrines at Beer-sheba and Beer-lahai-roi, would indicate that these places were centres of worship in which he appeared as a divinity. It is evident that his introduction only serves the purpose of connecting the Abrahamic clans, already located in the southland under the collective name of Israel, with the Jacob-el inflow that later occupied much the same ground, and for this reason became heir to the same name. Esau — which is Edom — is represented as becoming the father of the Edomites. They also had their home in Mt. Seir, to the southeast of the Dead Sea. The relationship of

twin brothers between Edom and Israel indicates that the later Israelites regarded the Edomites as their kin in a much nearer degree than any other of the Abrahamic branches.

Following the general route of the Jacob-el migration, the Joseph-el tribes, pushing in from behind, occupied Gilead and Bashan on the east of the Jordan, and with some of the Jacob-el tribes (Issachar and Zebulum) the central and northern part of the west country which constituted the mountains and highlands of Ephraim and Carmel. This would explain the ground for the relationship said to exist between the elder Jacob and the younger Joseph. This last contingent, bringing in still newer and more vigorous blood, under the energetic leadership of their tribesman, Joshua, soon acquired a predominating influence among the Israelitish clans that had obtained footing in Central and Northern Canaan. The clan Ephraim thus secured hegemony, a position that made the later preponderance of Judah extremely distasteful, and led to the establishment of the northern kingdom upon the death of Solomon.

The Conquest, as it has been called, was a movement of such slow and uncertain

growth that fully two centuries elapsed before anything like national life became possible. It was a conquest in which the superior advantages of civilized life, such as the Canaanites possessed, won to a considerable extent. The language, manners, customs, and especially the religion of ancient Canaan became the common property of the new composite people. The ancient shrines and seats of worship, such as Shiloh, Bethel, Shechem, Gibeon, Dan (Laish), Beersheba, Peniel, and many others were sacred places long before Israel invaded Canaan, and their ætiology was almost without exception of Canaanitish origin. From the first entrance into the country until the establishment of the monarchy was a period of retrogression, which may be attributed to the rude and barbarous customs of the newcomers, and the introduction of cruel, obscene, and revolting practices, especially in their religious cults.

While Israel was making permanent lodgment on both sides of the Jordan as far west as the highlands and mountainous country extended, they were not making progress toward subjugating the lower coast lands. An energetic and fairly well-civilized people,

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also of Semitic stock, had forced their way down the entire length of the coast from Cape Carmel to the River of Egypt. They were the Philistines, and their occupancy was so enduring that the entire country, both their own land and that of Israel, has been known for the past twenty-five hundred years by their name. Israel found in this people a foe far more formidable than in the effeminate Canaanites; not even in Israel's mightiest hour, during the reign of her warrior king, could these people be forced to anything better than an armed neutrality. They absorbed the civilization and language of the Canaanites, with whom they amalgamated, forming a homogeneous people, long before that process had been completed in Israel.

II

THE DESCENDANTS OF SHEM

IN order to understand the radical and far-reaching changes in the cult of Jehovah that culminated in the introduction of Judaism, it becomes necessary that we give some attention to the character and meanings of the old faith. It was a natural outgrowth of the religious sense, — a development common to the Semitic race which can be traced from early and most primitive conditions. The earliest social state was that of the clan, in which polyandry and the matriarchate prevailed; where children were members of the mother's family, and the husband was looked upon as an alien. Neither was that distinction of family ties which we now know recognized. All members of the clan were brothers, united by the tie of blood. Another feature of the early life was the totem. The savage sees in animal life, with its unerring instincts,

and the adaptation of its wants and needs to its physical surroundings, evidence of more than human foresight. The facility with which it eludes pursuit, or takes advantage of all favoring circumstances; the secrecy and care with which it rears its young; or, with the larger and more powerful animals, the might and fearlessness they manifest—all suggest to man, in the childhood of the race, more than human attributes. They were not looked upon as inferior to the human gens, nor was their life considered in any sense less sacred. Almost without exception, savage man everywhere regards himself as a descendant from a divine animal, — the common progenitor of his clan and of the animal class his totem represents. This animal is the visible representation of the clan god. Among the earliest conceptions of religious duty then would be that of maintaining unimpaired the blood bond between the members of the clan and their totem. To accomplish this, rites were instituted, the most common of which was the sacrifice of a victim, either a member of the clan or a totem animal, from which a feast was prepared. Of this feast all members of the clan partook, while the blood and

select portions were dedicated to their divinity, who was the most honored guest. These sacred portions were disposed of by being poured out over the altar, or at its foot, or by being etherealized in smoke. In some cases it was essential that the blood should be partaken of by the clan, and among the most rude and barbarous it has been deemed of highest importance that this should be done while the victim was still living. In all cases the entire remains must be disposed of before fermentative processes could ensue. The significance of this rite was that the blood and flesh thus partaken of became a part of the blood and flesh of each member of the clan, and the clan became *at one* with its god, thus establishing an indissoluble bond of relationship. It was an act expressive of homage to, and communion with, their divinity; and while piacular features were but vaguely conceived, yet, as time went on, especially in seasons of distress or danger, when it seemed that the anger of the divine one had been aroused against them, these sacrificial rites took on more and more an expiatory meaning, until in later ages, under such systems as Judaism, atonement became the all-im-

portant feature. No better illustration of the persistence of primitive rites and ceremonies, the original significance of which has in many cases been forgotten, can be found than in that fundamental belief of the Christian Church in the atoning character of Christ's blood, and the survival of the ceremony of the Eucharist, — which is a symbolic representation of the primitive feast in which the blood and flesh of the theanthropic victim was incorporated into the physical being of the worshipper in a most material way.

Besides these especially holy and stated occasions, on which a sacrosanct victim furnished the *pièce de résistance*, the slaughter of any animal for food was regarded as a sacrificial act, and must be performed in conformity with an established ritual. The life (that is, the blood) must be poured out a libation to the god. All that partook were thought to be renewing the tie of brotherhood. Outside the clan every one was looked upon as an enemy, yet to harm the stranger, or refuse hospitality to him who has sought the protection of the clan or any one of its members, was, and still is, among the Semites, a violation of the Semitic code of honor that

brings indelible shame to the perpetrator. This protection may be temporary, and usually is, but the fundamental idea contained in the custom is, that the rites of hospitality establish a temporary bond of blood. Another feature of primitive life that persisted in Semitic communities down to a late period was that of blood revenge. The murder of a member of a clan could be expiated only by the death of a member of the murderer's clan; and as a common life flowed in the veins of all its members, it was not material that the actual murderer should die, — any one of common blood sufficed; a principle of substitution that again finds prominence in the dogmas of the Christian Church. Individual crimes within the body of the clan, like murder, or violation of the tabus, was punished by outlawry, — excommunication from all the rights, privileges, and protection of the clan, and the favor of its god.

With the abolition of polyandry went the matriarchate. As woman lost the right to choose her own husband, she became subject to her husband's lordship, her children ceased to be members of her family, and for all purposes of inheritance and duties of blood

became members of his. The pastoral stage of human development which succeeded the savage brought with it new conditions and changed relations with the outside world. Still, the clan was the unit, and all within its body were amenable for the act of any one of its members. Property was common, hence an elaborate system of tabus grew up that restrained unwarranted license or abuse of what was held for common weal; these tabus were of divine appointment, because the god, who was the head and most important member of the community, was the one most especially interested in the well-being of the clan. The ancient conception of holiness was based upon these tabus, and did not contain an ethical element beyond the material well-being of the clan. A thing, a place, or a person was holy only as they were set apart for the joint use of the community and its god, or, in some cases, for the sole use of the god. From this same source was derived the ancient conception of uncleanness. While certain things were holy because consecrated by divine ownership or participation, there were certain other things, certain acts, certain animals, and certain physical conditions and disabilities,

that could not be tolerated within the precincts of the sanctuary, and which had a contaminating effect upon all with which they came in contact. These were under tabu either temporarily or permanently, and stigmatized as unclean. Of these, however, those of disability were usually temporary, and lasted only till the disabling cause had been removed; but with animals and many other visible objects the cause of uncleanness lay far deeper.

The savage sees in every object, whether animate or not, an indwelling conscious personality like what he himself possesses, and especially in the smaller animals, with their secretive habits, and the facility with which they vanish from human ken, he often thinks he catches a momentary glimpse of demoniac presentment that leaves upon his soul the impress of awe and fear. The jungles of the wadys, — the wild spots where underground moisture creates luxuriant growth, or the nooks and caves of the rugged mountainside, he peoples with races of supernatural beings, to whom he ascribes mysterious, and in most cases, hostile powers. These differ from his divinity in that they are less

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powerful, and have no worshippers, and like the animals they have no individual names. These are the jinns of the Semitic race, and on account of their maleficent character, the animals whose forms they are believed to be able to assume are classed as unclean. Still others better known of the animal kingdom, like swine, the horse, the camel, the hare, etc., were placed under tabu, and rated as unclean by the priestly authors of the eleventh chapters of Leviticus, not because they were dwelling-places for the jinns, but because they were among the sacred animals of nations at enmity with Israel, and therefore offensive to Israel's God.

As brothers became patriarchs, the clan widened into the tribe, to which accessions were often made by weak and feeble clans not directly connected by blood, but incorporated by adoption. The god of the strongest clan would eventually become the tribal god, and the patriarch become the tribal sheik. The advantages of settled, agricultural life would also appeal to those who became possessors of the fertile lands, and had sufficient strength to hold them. The civilizing effects of new

conditions would open up new views of divine power, and create new relationships with their god. In all Semitic countries the fertile land, especially that watered by underground springs or flowing streams, was anciently known as "Baal's land," a term that would mean "the Lord's land," a term applicable to any god, for this lord of fertility was usually identified with the tribal divinity, and special rites and ceremonies grew up, common to all Semitic people, intended to express a conception of a relationship to, and dependence upon, this feature of their god's goodness and loving-kindness toward them. This worship in ancient Canaan antedated the arrival of the Hebrew people in that country by unknown ages. Connected with it were sacred trees (*asherah*), sacred stones (*masseba*), sacred springs, and sacred wells. The cultus was distinguished by its cheerful and festal nature. The offerings were the fruits of the soil, — corn, wine, oil, fruit, etc., which constituted the feast, at which, in accordance with old Semitic custom, the worshippers were seated around the festive board, — the god their honored guest. That this cultus was

incorporated into and became the most important element in the worship of Jehovah from the time that Israel became agricultural until the captivity, there is not the slightest room for doubt. The Baal-worship was maintained by means of tithes, and the larger sanctuaries of the land were attended, and the rites administered by a regular priesthood, who depended upon this tribute for their living. Under the kings, Jerusalem was an exception, — there the ecclesiastical establishment was under the control of, and supported by, the sovereign; but elsewhere every town and hamlet had its high place, with its altar, its asherah, its masseba, at which the sacred rites were performed, and where the slaughtering of all animals for food was done, in accordance with an established ritual that made it a sacrificial act. As long as society was communal, the participants in the act were the whole clan, but as individual rights in property came to be recognized, any man might be his own priest. The fiction of the priestly tribe of Levi, the priestly family of Aaron, and the ancestry of Zadok, all belong to the age of Judaism. Samuel was an

Ephraimite, yet he is represented as succeeding Eli as the head of Israel's priesthood.¹

Old Israel knew nothing of monotheism beyond the uncertain hints of some of their prophets. Their eschatology, derived from their Canaanite predecessors, contained no hope for the future except a shadowy, aimless existence in the underworld, devoid of all that could make existence desirable. Their god was god of the living only, and sacrifice was, to them, primarily for the purpose of maintaining the bond between themselves and their deity by mutual incorporation of the life of the victim into their lives and that of their god. All their hopes were hopes for temporal blessings. With them God could be worshipped at any of the high places that filled the land; there a sacred image, or sacred trees, or stones, served to call to mind the presence of the divinity, who, it was believed, had consecrated the place by a theophany, or some divine manifestation of approval. The cult was administered by a priesthood which formed a guild not unlike the clergy of the

¹The late attempt to make Samuel a Levite, found in the sixth chapter of Chronicles, is a good illustration of priestly invention, and is in keeping with the tenor of the whole book.

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present day. That these holy places were seats for the worship of more than one divinity, we know from the frequent allusions of all the Old Testament writers to the prevalence of idolatrous practice, — such as that described in the vision of Ezekiel. That the priestly, or prophetic party, as it has been called, came into existence about the age of Hezekiah, and that they made strenuous efforts to purify the cult of Jehovah by the abolition of such practices as were notoriously foreign, we can believe. Still their efforts were of little avail, because they contravened the customs, habits, and settled prejudices of a long line of ancestors. The purity of the priesthood and the imperative prohibition of the employment of slave or captive labor in the service of the sanctuaries were unknown prior to the captivity. The reformation of Josiah, while it was still more thoroughgoing than that of Hezekiah, was evidently so unpopular that the country immediately returned to all the former practices as soon as the strong arm of government failed to support the priestly innovations.

III

TRADITION VS. HISTORY

UNTIL within the last twenty-five years our knowledge of conditions in ancient Canaan has depended largely upon inferences based upon the mythical and legendary narratives contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, with some auxiliary conclusions reached through the study of a few pagan writers. Biblical criticism has done much toward pointing out the inconsistencies and incongruities of what had, up to recent times, passed for sacred, and therefore unimpeachable history. But the testimony of the monuments and inscriptions found in recent years in Babylonia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, and especially the finding of the Tel El Amarna letters, or tablets, have cleared the field of vision to a remarkable degree. These have disclosed a condition that makes the Scripture stories told of the patriarchs, the bondage, the

exodus, and the period of the judges, in a large majority of cases historical impossibilities. These narratives depict the patriarchs as wandering at will throughout the length and breadth of the land, establishing their shrines, erecting their altars to commemorate their numerous theophanies, unmindful of, and unhindered by, other inhabitants, whom this pleasing pastoral picture represents as being so few in numbers, and occupying so little of the country, as to render their consent to such proceedings superfluous. But the enduring and unquestioned testimony of contemporary records reveals the fact that Canaan contained a numerous population, dwelling in cities and towns that were well fortified, and which served as nuclei for an abundant suburban and country life; that these people had passed the shepherd stage of development and become cultivators of the soil; that they had industries that required skilled artisans; and were largely engaged in mercantile pursuits. Among such a people the nomadic clans of the desert could only come by weight of numbers and force of arms. But the Scripture narratives breathe nothing but peace and security for the wandering fathers

of the Hebrew race. In two instances attempts were made to introduce warlike incidents, but their incongruities stamp them as the imaginings of a late author. In the first case we find in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, the patriarch Abram, although too weak and inoffensive to defend his wife from the lust of Pharaoh and Abimelech, suddenly blossoming into a victorious general, able to meet and conquer the King of Elam, who, with his three tributary kings and their armies of trained soldiers, were returning from the sack of five cities in the vale of Siddim. The unhistorical character of this tale becomes evident when we consider that the Elamite king to whom this story alludes antedated the age in which Abram could have been a resident of Canaan by seven hundred years.

The other incident is found in the thirty-fourth chapter of Genesis, and relates to the rape of Dinah, and the remarkable exploit of her two brothers, Simeon and Levi. These two men were able to slay a whole town full of men and carry away as spoils their wives and children, their flocks and herds, and all their wealth. That these were echoes from some of the tribal struggles in the early life

of Israel is not improbable, but that they were misplaced and distorted can hardly be doubted.

While northern Israel was slowly acquiring the consistency of a united people, the process in the southern country was also developing a composite tribe in which the Canaanitish element predominated to a much greater degree than in the north. Somewhere in the south or southeast existed a community that was known by the name of Israel at a date prior to that fixed for the exodus. These people were agriculturists. These facts are established by the inscriptions of Mernephtah, the supposed Pharaoh of the Exodus, who mentions Israel, with other people, whose lands he has overrun and whose corn he has destroyed. The connection of this people with those of Kadesh Barnea can hardly be questioned, and it is also quite certain that these communities were the ones over which Moses became the theocratic head, these the people to whom he introduced his Midianite divinity, — Jehovah. The ethnic relationship between Midian and Israel is one of the claims of Jewish tradition. That Moses resided at Midian for forty years — that he married the

daughter of a Midianite, who, we must infer from the eighteenth chapter of Exodus, was a priest of Jehovah — that he was in the service of this priest for forty years — that this service was performed in close proximity to the mountain of Jehovah — that this mountain was a part of Midian — and that Jehovah consents to adopt the Israelitish nation and make it his especial care, because of his great regard for Moses, are either the plain statements of the Hebrew Scriptures, or inferences that cannot be avoided. In all probability Moses was a Midianite by adoption. He is represented as being of the tribe of Levi, but there is no evidence that there ever was any tribe of Levi except in the professional sense of clergy. That the personality of Moses is real can hardly be disputed, and that the moulding process that eventually developed the kingdom of Israel was due, in a great measure, to the civil and religious institutions of which he was the founder, is also probable; but the account which makes him the head of a nation already organized, and represents him as promulgating elaborate codes of laws, has not the slightest basis of historical probability. His influence during his lifetime

was undoubtedly restricted to the Bedawin clans of Israel and Midian (Kenezites), and the people of southern Canaan, which afterward became Judah.

The Hebrew Scriptures contain four well-defined accounts of what purports to be the history of the Hebrew people and their ancestors, from the beginning of the world to the destruction of the northern kingdom. These four versions are grouped together in what might appear to an uncritical reader as a homogeneous narration. Differences in style, diction, and conception, however, make the careful reader aware of radical and irreconcilable disagreements. What are related as essential facts in one account are often entirely ignored or flatly contradicted in another. These four versions were not the work of single historians, nor produced within a single lifetime, but the product of schools of theologic partisans that gathered their material from the folk-lore of the country, from dim memories of their national life that had survived in their legends and traditions, sagas of the days of old, and last, but not least, from their imaginations. The earlier products of these schools have disappeared, — for

instance: "The Book of Jasher" and "The Wars of Jehovah," or have been rearranged and incorporated into the later books of the Bible. From these sources our editors selected their material, compiled, redacted, added to and subtracted from, as seemed best to suit their several purposes. These purposes were *never* historic, but ætiologic, — past events had no value or pertinence in their estimation, only as they could be made to furnish proofs of the divine call and covenants, or emphasized the necessity of maintaining the worship and cult of Israel's God. The aim of the authors was not history, but to establish beyond question the close relationship that existed between Israel and God, and to impress upon the Hebrew people as forcibly as possible the necessity of unquestioning faith in, and obedience to, the hierarchy that had assumed to be the revealer of God's will and final authority on all matters pertaining to public or private life.

These four versions are usually designated "The Early Judean," "The Early Ephraimite," "The Deuteronomic," and "The Priestly." In point of time the Early Judean probably came first, and began to take

literary form as a connected narrative somewhere about the middle of the ninth century B. C. Soon after appeared the Ephraimite narratives. These two versions had much in common, but the authors of one often ignored what seemed to be important transactions related by the other. For instance, the Judean narrators seem to be ignorant of Joshua, the hero of the northern tribes, and the conquests described as achieved by him in the book which bears his name, for a condition is described in the first chapter of Judges, after the announcement of Joshua's death, which shows that Canaan still remained in the possession of the Canaanites, and that the conquest had still to be achieved. Again Judah is represented as being the eldest instead of Reuben. On the other hand the Ephraimite narratives ignore Hebron and the southern sanctuaries. All this points to many legends and tribal interests not held in common, and an inborn feeling of jealousy between the northern and southern sections of the united kingdom that persisted and became intensified after the division.

Sometime about the middle of the seventh century B. C. a set of redactors undertook and

completed the task of blending these versions in one. They produced what is known as the Deuteronomic version. This took place after the reformation of Josiah, which followed the ascendancy of priestly influence that marked the reign of this king. The Deuteronomists were Judeans of the southern prophetic school. They saw the desirability of uniting these two groups of narratives under one head, and with free hand they pruned such legendary growths as materially interfered with their purpose. We can certainly infer that sectional prejudice, which can hardly be overestimated in that age, would impel them to make radical changes in, and prune fearlessly, the Ephraimite documents, while a tender regard for the Judean would lead them to preserve as much as possible the original forms. With the extinction of the northern kingdom they became heirs of all that had pertained to its literary and religious life. The school of northern prophets, among whom such men as Elijah, Elisha, Amos, and Hosea were leaders, had passed away. Their labors for the advancement of Jehovah's cult could not be ignored, but their views and efforts, we have every reason to believe, were

distorted in many ways. This was the age in which Judaism was conceived, — a period of gestation in which were developed the body and organs of that hierarchy whose functions were formalism, legalism, and priestly control in secular as well as religious matters. It marked the beginning of the passing of the religion of old Israel. In that religion Jehovah was the God of the fathers because he was God of the desert, — God of the lightning and storm, — the friend and protector of the wandering Bedawin herdsman. As the people of Israel became agriculturists, they brought their offerings to agricultural divinities, whose shrines were found on every hill-top, under every green tree, and by every flowing spring. There the various gods, — Jehovah, Milcom, Chemosh, Astarte, and others, — under the comprehensive title of El, Bel, or Baal, were invited to feast with their worshippers and sanctify with their presence the orgies that followed.

The priestly writers, to whom we are indebted for the last compilation of the Hebrew literature, attributed all the evils which their nation had suffered to the idolatries of their ancestors. They realized the fact that the

principles of Judaism, of which they were exponents, and their religious observances were diametrically opposed to the ancient religion, and it became their sacred study so to present the past of their people, that the old religious practices would appear to be what had caused the loss of Jehovah's favor, and consequently all their woes. They labored and perfected their version not earlier than the first half of the third century B. C. Not that the canon was closed at that early date, for we know that some of the books of the Old Testament, notably Esther and Daniel, were products of the Maccabean age.

Very different was the view taken by the ante-exilic prophets. They indeed viewed with alarm and feelings of despair the evident desertion of Israel by Jehovah, and what they believed to be evidences of his wrath. But they were impressed by a feeling that the cause lay in the moral obliquity of the people and their rulers. The forms and ceremonies of the ancient cult expressed, as far as outward form could do, the religious hopes and aspirations of their age; but they had awakened to the consciousness that the divinity whom they could adore must love mercy and

justice, — that the sorrows of poverty and helpless suffering must awaken in him a divine indignation against oppressors, — against those who, while living in marble palaces and sleeping upon ivory beds, had shown no mercy to the poor, but practised all manner of extortion. The burden of every prophet, from Elijah to Ezekiel, was woe and impending disaster to the ruling classes of Israel, on account of their conscienceless treatment of the poor and helpless, and if we may believe these storm-petrels, as they have been called, we are certain no people ever existed in which human sympathy and moral sense were so conspicuously wanting as in this chosen people of God.

IV

GOD AND PROPHET

It is the prevailing idea that the prophets of Israel were a class totally unlike the prophets of any other people. That they, and they only, were endowed with capacity for recognizing the true God, voicing his thoughts, and indicating his will. All other gods were false gods, all other prophets were false prophets, and all other oracles were false oracles. This view is the outgrowth of Judaism, — the result of a narrow, bigoted, intolerant spirit, such as was found nowhere in the ancient world besides. This spirit became the inheritance of the Christian and Moslem religions, and it has been the *primum mobile* of the most bloody, most cruel wars that have disgraced the annals of history, and the most inhuman persecutions that ingenuity has been able to invent.

With the single exception that developed

from the religion of Israel, God was God everywhere; the various names by which he was known in the ancient world were but signs that stood for One First Grand Cause. This Cause was always clothed with a personality, and the recognition of their own divinities in other pantheons was an almost universal trait in the theology of ancient nations. This conception was, as it is to-day, universal. Allah of the Mohammedans is not thought of as separate from the God of the Christians. However much the conceptions may differ in detail, both religions are exactly alike in conceiving this Being as the fundamental principle upon which everything rests. Amun, Zeus, and Jupiter were interchangeable terms for exactly the same deity, and to this triad one of the Roman emperors added Jehovah, making a quaternion of names for one conception of universal cause. In Semitic countries, under the generic name of Bel, El, Baal, and Al (all of which are simply slight variations of the same word), God has been worshipped from the most remote period down to the present time. Bel Marduk, the supreme god of the Babylonian pantheon, was the fulness of divinity of which all other

divine beings were personified attributes. Under the religion of Old Israel, the worshipper, whether it was Moses, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, or even Isaiah or Elijah, unquestionably paid divine honors to other gods, even while they made El Jehovah the head of their pantheon. Altars to Milcom, Molech, Chemosh, Dagon, Astarte, and others were scattered throughout the land, or their sacrificial rites performed upon the altars of Jehovah himself. Nor was this all; the various rites that originally characterized one cult were often incorporated into others, a process of syncretism which has effectually obscured many important features in them all. Judaism affirms that it was to Molech, and upon his altars in the Valley of Hinnon, that the people of Jerusalem sacrificed their first-born, yet we have indisputable evidence that in Jehovah's cult the same inhuman rites were practised, and, more than that, there are strong reasons for believing that their introduction into Canaan was by the Hebrew contingent that came from the southland.

The prophetic class in Israel has its analogue in every religion under the sun. The nearer a people is to savagery, the more pro-

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nounced the functions of this class become; and the nearer a people is to enlightenment and general intelligence, the more it is disguised and inoperative. The prophetic class in Israel, as elsewhere, was usually connected with the priestly. It was the function of the prophets to interpret the will of their divinity. Among savage and uncivilized people this is done by means of omens, theophanies, dreams, and rites and ceremonies that induce an ecstatic frame of mind which enables them to see visions and hear voices that have no objective reality. The patriarchs of Israel are represented as communicating with God direct, or by dreams; Aaron and the priesthood after him by means of the Urim and Thummim; Saul and David, in common with Israelites generally, by means of the Teraphim, which were their household gods; also by dreams and the ecstatic method. Samuel and the later prophets employed some of these means, but seem to have depended largely upon an inward control that made use of their organs of speech, or directed their movements in symbolic attitudes, gestures, or conduct, intended to express the divine will.

V

MOSAISM

AFTER the patriarchs, the first character to engage our attention is Moses, who may be regarded as the first great national prophet of Israel. The full and exact account which we possess of him and his works, when subjected to the light of modern methods of research, fades into the dim and shadowy region of legend and tradition. This account undoubtedly contains a grain of historical truth, but beyond the bald facts of his existence, his introduction to the Hebrew tribes that occupied Kadesh Barnea of the Midianite God, Jehovah and his cult, and the organization of his people into a political body, by coalescing the several clans that came under his influence, giving them a common impulse by means of a common religion, we know of him absolutely nothing.

Cornill, a staunch and able defender of the

view that the religion of Israel was a divine preparation for the coming of Christianity, in his "Prophets of Israel," feels obliged to admit the paucity of historic material regarding Moses. He uses the following words: "And now I must make an admission to you, which it is hard for me to make, but which is my fullest scientific conviction, based upon the most cogent grounds, that in the sense in which the historian speaks of 'knowing,' we know absolutely nothing about Moses. All original records are missing; we have not received a line, not even a word, from Moses himself, or from any of his contemporaries; even the celebrated Ten Commandments are not from him, but, as can be proved, were written in the first half of the seventh century between 700 and 650 B. C. The oldest accounts we have of Moses are five hundred years later than his time. Nevertheless, this comparatively modern tradition contains some special features which are important, and require to be considered in the solution of the question now occupying our attention."

These features, which he attributes to the work of Moses, are essentially as follows:

Israel never had a mythology; never differentiated the deity sexually; the cult of Israel was distinguished by great simplicity and purity, as is proved by such thoroughly Israelitic feasts as the Passover, the offerings of the firstlings of the flock during the vernal equinox, and the New Moons. Israel denounces with abhorrence the sacrificing of children, and especially that religious immorality, that most detestable of all religious aberrations, which considered prostitution an act of worship. Israel was in possession of a high and pure morality, unchastity being something inconceivable to the reasonable and normally organized Israelite. But the most important feature of all was the manner in which Israel conceives its relations to God.

All these seem strange and unwarranted conclusions to draw from such facts as we know regarding conditions in ancient Israel. The account of the preservation of Moses (copied from the story of Sargon of Agade), the theophanies, miracles in Egypt and at the Red Sea, the giving of the law from Mt. Sinai, the manna and a hundred other exhibitions of divine presence and power, are either facts or myths — true or fabulous — similar

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in every respect to the mythology of every ancient people. In the light of the twentieth century, and the knowledge of the sources whence these compilations came, we feel certain that Israel possessed a mythology, and a copious one. (See page 49 of W. R. Smith's "Religion of the Semites.")

From what we know of the rites and ceremonies of the ancient Israelitish religion, we must conclude that the central idea of their worship was to feast with their divinity. The bringing of gifts to his altar, and the sacrifice of animals thereon was for the purpose of providing a supply of good things from which to make a feast unto their El. He was their invited guest; select portions of the food were reserved for him, especially the blood, which was poured out in his honor. Songs were sung and dances performed intended to express grateful acknowledgment of indebtedness to him for the temporal blessings that were enjoyed. No doubt there were then, as now, earnest, devout souls who saw in the ceremonies of their worship deeper meanings, and attached to them a spiritual significance. That this method of worship was common to the ancient world, we surely

know; and that these feasts were often the occasion of drunken orgies is also certain, and from unmistakable evidence drawn from admissions of the later writers, we are also certain that Israel was no exception, and in no wise different from all the others. Of the particular feasts which he mentions as being thoroughly Israelitic, such as the Passover, the New Moons, etc., we have only to refer to such writers as Jastrow, Sayce, and others, to find that the time of the vernal equinox, the new moons, and the Sabbaths were sacred days with the Assyrio-Babylonian people, and were observed with feast and song exactly as in Israel.

With the religion of Zoroaster plainly in view, in which there is no trace of female divinities, which was indeed the source from which the monotheistic ideas of Judaism were derived, it is difficult to understand why this author should make the statement that the people of Israel were the only people who never differentiated the deity sexually.

In considering the denunciations of Israel against the sacrificing of children, we must bear in mind the fact that not the slightest evidence exists of any protest against this

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practice until later than Elijah, Amos, and Isaiah. The act of Ahaz called forth no re-monstrance from Isaiah, and the conduct of the people, both then and when Mesha, the Moabite king, sacrificed his first-born upon the walls of his capital, shows that both these Hebraic people regarded this act as the most commendable and efficacious that could possibly be performed. It was to them the supreme act of devotion which a divinity could not ignore. It was not until the age of Jeremiah and Ezekiel that a consciousness of the enormity of this crime dawned upon even the greatest of the Hebrew thinkers.

That this religious rite was not a feature of the ancient Canaanite cults until after their contact with the Hebrew tribes, is almost certain. We know that the Amorite people, who occupied Canaan for more than a thousand years prior to the Hebrew inflow, were a civilized people intimately connected with their congeners who controlled the destinies of all Western Asia during that period, from their seat of empire in the Euphrates Valley, and we can find no evidence among the abundant remains of that magnificent civilization that human sacrifice was ever practised there.

On the other hand, the dedication of the first-born for sacrificial purposes seems to be one of the fundamental features of Jehovah's cult (see Exodus, 13th chapter and 2d verse), — one of the few that stand out with peculiar distinctness emphasizing Jehovah's character as understood and represented by all the Old Testament writers. He was primarily a God of the desert, of lightning and storm. He was a God of war and slaughter. Denunciation and hate is the burden of all his utterances against every people except his chosen, and from them he exacts the most valued thing that they possess, — their first-born. The redemption feature belongs to the latest phase — Judaism — promulgated in an age when moral sense had developed too far to permit literal fulfilment, but yet when old ideas were still regnant.

We have no desire to dispute the statement that religious prostitution was characteristic of Canaanite religions prior to the advent of Israel, as it certainly was of the cults of Babylonia, from which the Amoritic people drew all their inspiration in matters pertaining to their civil and religious life. It is more than probable that this feature of Je-

hovah's worship was incorporated from this source; but that it *was* a feature of his worship, from patriarchal times to the destruction of the first temple by Nebuchadnezzar, admits of no dispute. Of course we cannot accept the literal version of the Judah and Tamar episode, but we can gather from it the view which the compiler took of ancient conditions, and certainly that there was no feeling of abhorrence manifested in his handling of this ancient legend. To him Tamar's act was a praiseworthy one, which placed her among the mothers of Israel in spite of her Canaanitish origin, and made her fit ancestress of David and the line of Judaic kings. Neither is there a note of disapproval of Judah's conduct, excepting that of denying to Tamar her levirate rights. The story of her assuming the rôle of sacred prostitute, and by this subterfuge obtaining these rights, shows that in the writer's age the institution was an established one, and that he believed it came from a remote antiquity, and that he regarded the whole transaction as pleasing to Jehovah, who stamps it with his approval by making Tamar, next to Sarah, the most important woman in Hebrew history.

The claims of high and pure morality, made by our author for the Israelitish people, ill accord with the admissions made, and the incidents related, by all the Old Testament writers who attempted to give the story of Israel's life, and the social and political conditions that prevailed throughout their entire national existence. The accusations preferred against both the governments and peoples of Israel and Judah by Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, include every crime that a people could well be guilty of. Murder, unchastity, licentiousness, the perverting of justice, extortion, and the grinding the faces of the poor are specific charges made. The character of the culture and moral sense of this people can be inferred, to some extent, from the character of their legal codes. Of these the oldest, the covenant code, a production that dates somewhere between 700 and 650 B. C., reveals to us the fact that a man had absolute control over his family even in matters of life and death; that a woman was regarded as property, was bought and sold, under certain restrictions, and could be divorced whenever she failed to please her husband by his simply writing

her a bill of divorcement. A man might smite his servant or his maid with a rod; should they die immediately, he shall surely be punished, but what that punishment shall be is not specified, while a penalty is attached to all other crimes. Should they not die immediately, but continue a day or two, then he goes unpunished, for they are their master's money. The legal condition and treatment of slaves; the legal condition and treatment of women; the principle and practice of blood-revenge, all point to a stage of civilization not far removed from savagery, a state of society in which high and pure canons of morality would be impossible. This code shows Babylonian influences, and reminds us in places of the code of Hammurabi, although far below the latter in moral tone. It has been the custom from the rise of Judaism to the present day to attribute all the moral delinquencies of the Hebrew nation to the peoples that surrounded them, and the impression has prevailed that these people were steeped in all manner of iniquity and vicious practice. All this is purely gratuitous assumption. There is not the slightest reason for supposing that the Syrians, the Sidonians,

the Philistines, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Edomites, or the ancient Canaanites were not morally equals of the Israelites in every particular.

To explain the manner in which the Israelitish people conceived of God and their relations to him, it has been thought necessary by those who believe in the divine mission of Israel to employ a special word. This has been supplied by Max Müller in the word "Henotheism." This word is intended to express a conception of deity which these thinkers believe was peculiar to Israel, and totally unlike that of any other people. By it, it is understood that Jehovah is Israel's God exclusively. The idea is not monotheistic, because Jehovah was not the only existing God, but he was the only one an Israelite could serve; to violate this law was the blackest crime of which an Israelite could be guilty, — punishable by death. To quote from Cornill's "The Prophets of Israel:" "Thus the relation of the Israelites to their only God was especially close and intimate; the religious instinct concentrated itself on one object, and thereby received an intensity, which is foreign to polytheism, and must for-

ever remain foreign to it, — Jehovah alone is the God of Israel, who suffers no one and nothing beside him, who will belong entirely and exclusively to this people, but will have this people belong entirely and exclusively to him, so it shall be a pure and pious people, whose whole life, even in the apparently most public and worldly matters, is a service of God, and thus God is source and shield of all justice and all morality. These must all have been the genuine and specific thoughts of Moses.” Another feature of their relation, dwelt upon by the same author as peculiar to Israel, was that there was no distinction between divine and human law, or rather, that law, in order to be law and valid, must come through the priestly oracles, which played so important a part in ancient days, and which must be regarded as a Mosaic institution. This was important, for it made God accessible in practical life, and by it the approach to him was made easy.

Now all these features of Israel's view of God are features that characterize a certain stage of religious development everywhere. We may assume that the relation between Jehovah and Israel was a peculiar one; that

he was not an original God with them, but that they were his by adoption, confirmed by a covenant, the conditions of which were that their first-born, both man and beast, if without blemish, should be his unreservedly, and that they should make him their sole deity, and implicitly obey his commands. In return, they were to become his chosen people, and receive the full benefit of his might as a God of storm and lightning, war and blood. These were certainly features of old Israel's theology that can be traced to Mosaic dispensation. In precisely the same way, we have every reason to believe, Chemosh was god of Moab, and Milcom god of Ammon. The language used by Mesha on the Moabite stone, and the little light shed upon the circumstances by the last few verses of the third chapter of Second Kings confirm this view. Again we find that it has been a common occurrence, among the wandering Arab tribes, to transfer allegiance from one divinity to another, as when a clan or smaller tribe attaches itself to a more powerful one, it becomes the client of the other's god, just as we have every reason to believe the followers of Moses became clients of Jehovah. This

new relationship would involve a keener sense of dependence, and higher feelings of devotion would be quickened by the thought that the protection and favor of the god was a thing of free grace and not of national right, and this relation would be confirmed by a covenant.

From the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel to the present, it has been the labor of both Judaic and Christian writers to represent that the practice of child immolation, which was general among the inhabitants of Palestine down to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, was derived from the gods and people that surrounded Israel. Melcarth of Phœnicia, Dagon of Philistia, Chemosh of Moab, and Milcom of Ammon, were the divinities that have had to bear all the opprobrium of this horrible practice. This is neither right nor just. Of all the divinities of ancient Canaan, Jehovah is the only one whose original character would suggest pleasure in the shedding of blood, and the Hebrew Scriptures are literally filled with evidences of his sanguinary disposition. Milcom and Chemosh were both solar deities; Melcarth was an agricultural divinity, representing the prin-

principle of fecundity and growth; while Dagon, half-man and half-fish, bore the character of, as he was no doubt derived from, Oannes, the fish-god of Eridu, from whom the Sumerian people believed their civilization and knowledge of the arts originated. The Old Testament writers of the Judaic period sought to establish the belief that these rites in Israel were only connected with the worship of a deity whom they called Molech, but Molech, like El or Baal (Lord), is not the proper name of a deity, but an honorific title, and simply signifies "the king." W. Robertson Smith says: "The rise of Molech worship does not imply the introduction into the religion of Judah of an altogether new deity, but only a heathenish development of Jehovah's worship." What he means by "heathenish development" is not quite clear, as it is absolutely impossible to show that these rites were not the original institutes of Jehovah's worship as introduced by Moses. That the immolation of children was regarded as just as acceptable to Jehovah as burnt offerings, with calves a year old, thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil, is the only inference we can draw from

the sixth chapter of Micah; but *all* these offerings the prophet regards as offensive to God from a people who give scant measure, who have wicked balances and deceitful weights, who are full of violence and lies. These are the abominations that offend his moral sense, not the human sacrifices. In voicing God's controversy with his people, he specifies that they shall do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God, but says not one word about their reforming their worship by abolishing this relic of savagery.

The picture of old Israel's religion has to be seen through the veil of Judaism, but the veil is so thin in spots that the picture can be fairly well discerned. This veil is the well-devised scheme of the Levitical theocracy, which received its finishing touches and the framework of pseudo-history to support it upon the plains of Babylon, beside the river Chebar. The nation had suffered complete shipwreck, but from the flotsam, schools of rabbinical writers proceeded to erect the Jewish Church. If they were not the originators of the principle that the end justifies the means, they were certainly deeply imbued with the belief that the exigencies of the

reformed religion they sought to establish on the ruins of their old nationality, demanded the prestige of antiquity and divine authority. These essentials they were able to supply largely from the literary remains of the early Judean and Ephraimitic authors of Israel's early history, supplemented by the labors of the Deuteronomists (who had already redacted and compiled all the older material), and the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Amos, Hosea, Ezekiel, and other of the lesser prophets. These authorities they proceeded to expurgate, interpolate, and change to suit the general purpose they had in view, while another block of old Israel's literature — among which were such works as "The Book of Jasher," "The Wars of Jehovah," and "The Chronicles of the Kings" — were allowed quietly to disappear.

It is now a well-known fact that all authority for the establishment of that priestly hierarchy that maintained the Jewish Church and the unity of the Jewish people from Nehemiah to the destruction of the second temple, evolved from the Judean schools located at Babylon during the captivity. The foundation had been laid by the Deuterono-

mists in the age of Josiah, but no such revolution in the cultus of Jehovah as was introduced by Ezra was dreamed of by the prophetic party of that time; nor would such radical changes have been possible had not the century of the captivity intervened, separating the people from the memories and associations of their fatherland. As it was, the return brought but a small fraction of the expatriated ones, and this fraction was largely identified with priestly interests. To the labor of these hierarchs we are indebted for the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures as known to-day; and but for their profound ignorance of all principles of criticism, the task of the present age in arriving at just conclusions regarding conditions in ancient Canaan would have been greatly augmented.

There was, however, no lack of well-digested plan and careful attention to details in the work these Ezraids performed; and during the long and uncritical period which elapsed between the fourth century B. C. and the middle of the eighteenth century A. D., the anachronisms, the flagrant disregard of historical probity, in projecting institutions and usages of their own age and creation upon

the background of Mosaism, escaped attention.

The old Israel that went into exile belonged to a stage of civilization primitive in character, and based upon the customs, habits, and traditions of the desert. The new Israel that returned brought with it some knowledge of the outside world, and a dim and perverted comprehension of the forces that had developed the culture, — the superior civilization of the people of the Mesopotamian plain. More than anything else it had brought an entirely new view of the religious field, new ordinances of worship, new and vastly changed conceptions of deity, of the meaning and purpose of sacrifice, and a new eschatology. The functions of the state became the business of a church, as far as governmental authority was permitted by the Persian kings.

VI

THE PROPHETS

THE political situation in the last days of Judah, before the captivity, is revealed by means of the prophets, whose sayings and doings have been allowed to come down to us. It is evident that the country was divided by two parties, and that ordinarily these parties antagonized over the question of jurisdiction between Church and state. Under the kings of the united monarchy the question of authority had not arisen. Saul, David, and Solomon ardently supported a religious establishment, but did not for a moment lose sight of the necessity of subordinating this establishment to the power and authority of the state. The priests were creatures of their creation, and while they might exert an influence over the monarch, and by insistent effort add materially to the prestige and prerogative of their class, still the religious as well as

the secular functions of the state were under the control of the king.

The last of these three kings recognized the importance of giving his nation and particularly his capital a cosmopolitan character, of introducing the arts and culture of his more civilized neighbors by inducing learned men and skilful artisans from the important centres of the civilized world to become residents of his kingdom. This would and did impel him to assume a liberal attitude toward the gods and worship of surrounding people. Hence the chapel, which he attached to his palace, and which has been magnified by Judaic writers into the most beautiful and costly fane the world has ever seen, became a pantheon in which the cults and worship of other gods besides Jehovah found lodgment. Nor was this inconsistent with good politics and the best interests of his kingdom, and more than any other feature of his reign it helped to establish his much vaunted reputation for wisdom. That he was a despot of the most pronounced type, and that his oppressive measures bred such a discontent that at his death Israel proper repudiated his dynasty, are matters of history; still, the most impor-

tant city of his kingdom, the one most closely associated with the glory of his and his father's reigns, was left to his descendants, and for about three hundred and fifty years they maintained a precarious foothold (with few and short periods of independence), as an appanage of the larger, more powerful northern kingdom, or as vassal of the Assyrian or Babylonian monarchs.

For our knowledge of the situation in the northern kingdom we are obliged to rely upon the utterances of the prophets Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Micah, and Hosea; upon the records that have been preserved on Egyptian, Assyrian, and Babylonian monuments, and upon the garbled and intensely hostile account that has come down to us in the books of Kings and Chronicles of the Jewish canon. Of the prophets, Elijah and Elisha left no written evidence, of their mission. The last three, however, not only delivered their messages orally but committed the same to writing. That we possess unexpurgated versions of their productions is extremely improbable; still, we are quite certain that their polemics were directed against the immoral practices and oppressive measures of the ruling classes.

They appeared as advocates of just and humane treatment of the poor, as stern and implacable accusers of those who by extortion and inordinate greed had deprived the unfortunate of their countrymen of their substance, their liberties, and even their lives. As champions of the poor, these men appeared in the garb of poverty, and in their denunciations of the ruling classes they voiced a feeling as universal then as now, that a fearful retribution awaits those who live in luxury and ease bought with the unrequited toil and suffering of others. That these men were the head and front of a movement looking toward a moral reform; that they sought to establish their propaganda upon the basis of religion, and that they announced a new and hitherto unknown conception of God as a moral being in whom the attributes of justice, love, and mercy predominated, and to whom injustice and oppression were offensive, are facts that can be easily discerned; but another feature of their politico-religious movement stands out equally clear, and that is, that the narrow and uncompromising temper of their zeal led them into intrigues and plots that worked incalculable evil to their

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country. It was through their machinations that the house of Omri was overthrown and the monster Jehu installed in power, who by his fiendish cruelty and intolerant attitude did much to destroy the respectable character and influence that Israel had achieved under the reigns of Omri and Ahab. Much as the character of Ahab has been maligned, the fact that he most nobly and gloriously led his country in a war which rescued her from the clutches of her powerful Syrian foe, and sealed the victory with his own life, we know from the reluctant admissions of his political enemies. Among these were Elijah and Elisha. From what we can discover of the former, his crusade was against the social evils that afflicted his country. Licentiousness, debauchery, and corruption were rampant in both the civil and religious high places. The flagrant injustice in the administration of law had given him a following among the people which made him both feared and hated. Still, his attack was not against the old established worship, but against the ministers of that worship, who by their easy compliance or positive support were important factors in maintaining the old abuses.

He has no word against the sacred bulls at Bethel and Dan; he never mentions the high places, the asherahs, the maccabas, the sacred groves, of which the later Judaic writers never tire of representing as offensive to Jehovah; he does not suggest that the worship of Baal is not the proper thing for the Phoenician people; he has no fault to find because Ahab has erected a temple to Baal for the convenience of his wife Jezebel, — but it was the iniquity of the act by which Ahab obtained the garden of Naboth that inspired the terrible denunciation he uttered against the house of Omri.

The character of Elisha and the rôle he played were altogether different. He acted where Elijah only preached. As a conspirator and revolutionist he was instrumental in placing Jehu upon the throne, and was actively behind that monarch in his crusade against the foreign cults that had been planted in Israel, particularly the worship of the Tyrian Baal. He succeeded in inaugurating a bloody persecution of the adherents of other faiths, and while the movement he was so fully identified with was successful in suppressing, for a time, other religious cults, the

moral reform so ardently hoped for by Elijah never came. All the elements of good government and righteous administration of law were totally wanting. Cruelty and savagery prevailed, and the reigns of Jehu and his son Jehoahaz marked the darkest, gloomiest period of Israel's history. Under the reign of Jeroboam II. Israel again became a respectable power among the Syrian nations. He succeeded in overcoming the old-time enemies of his country and enlarging her borders beyond even that of the united monarchy. Still, the moral status of the government and people showed no improvement. If we may credit the testimony of Amos, Micah, and Hosea, a lamentable condition prevailed, in which both civil and religious institutes, that should safeguard the common interests, were employed for purposes of oppression and the gratification of pride and lust. The mission of Amos was one of warning.

He dwells upon the justice of Jehovah. He realizes the utter heartlessness of the forms and ceremonies of a worship that ignores every sentiment of justice and humanity, — that has in it no rebuke for extortion and greed. It is probably before the assem-

bled multitudes at Bethel, gathered for the purpose of celebrating one of the great annual feasts in honor of Jehovah, that he delivers the dread message he believes God has sent him to proclaim. It was at a time when Israel, under the reign of Jeroboam II., had attained a degree of splendor and power never before equalled. The kingdom was greater even than that of David and Solomon. Judah, Syria, Moab, and Ammon were vassal states from which streams of tribute were flowing to enrich the Ephraimitic kingdom. Samaria was filled with palaces of ivory and houses of hewn stone, while scattered about the country were castles and forts almost without number. Pomp, splendor, and riches abounded on every hand. It was a period of unusual prosperity and seeming security. Consequently the feast was made an especial occasion of joyful, grateful acknowledgment to Jehovah for what this people believed to be evidences of divine approval and favor. The sacred image of the divine bull, under which form Jehovah was worshipped, both at Bethel and Dan, was decked with garlands and surrounded by worshippers, while an army of priests were busy

offering untold sacrifices upon his altars. It was at some such an occasion as this that Amos stilled the festive songs and silenced the merry-makers with the mournful cry with which the people of Israel were wont to express their grief for the death of loved ones. He arraigns Israel for the enormity of her sins, and thrills the assembled multitudes with dark forebodings of impending doom. Nor does he leave in the minds of his listeners any doubt as to what was the nature of these sins. It was not indulgence in idolatrous practice, as the priestly compilers would have us think, but the corruption of the governing classes, — the nobles and the rich, who, unhindered by conscience and unrestrained by law, practised all manner of extortion and violence against the needy and the weak. Their crimes were not against religion, but against the common dictates of humanity. The officials of the government sold justice to the highest bidder; the wealthy landowner exacted extortionate rates for the use of his land, or exorbitant prices for its products, making, as Amos puts it, the shekel large and the ephah small, falsifying the balances by deceit, buying the poor for silver and the

needy for a pair of shoes, and forcing the refuse of the wheat upon them. The inference drawn from the utterances of Elijah, Amos, and Hosea of the northern kingdom, and the first Isaiah and Micah of the southern, and also from what may be gathered from the Deuteronomist in the books of Kings, is that a total want of restraint over the rich and powerful prevailed during the period that succeeded the separation, until the extinction of these two kingdoms as political states. There seems to have been an entire absence of moral sense, — but no lack of the religious, — for great stress is laid upon the punctiliousness with which the various fasts and feasts, the Sabbaths and the new moons, and other rites of worship paid to Jehovah should be observed. It was the protest of the oppressed that these prophets voiced. They felt that the rottenness of social conditions had reached its limit, — that the God whom they had been wont to regard as the especial divinity of their nation must be filled with a righteous abhorrence of the spirit of the age; hence Amos addresses his people with these words, as though spoken by God himself:

“ I hate, I despise your feast-days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.”

These prophets were the thinkers of their age; they discerned in these conditions unmistakable symptoms of dissolution and decay. The overshadowing power of Assyria was an ever-present menace; strong nations to the north and east had succumbed to its invincible might, and it was only a question of time when Israel and Judah would feel the iron grip of the Assyrian monarch's hand. A concept of monotheism had begun to take form, that expressed itself in the feeling that Jehovah, who has heretofore been looked upon as their God, and theirs only, must be a universal God, — God of everything, everywhere. He has not only brought the Hebrew nation from Egypt to the land of Canaan, but also the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir. Amos further puts the question into God's mouth, “ Are ye not as the children

of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel?" To the Israelitish people this was a new and astonishing doctrine. The people at large made the cause of Jehovah and Israel one; they could not conceive that he could deliver them over to destruction. If they were destroyed, what would become of himself? Other nations were provided with gods and could have no use for him. While he might allow them to be sorely punished, it was incredible that the words of the prophet could come true. The event proved the prophet's foresight, — but it has utterly failed to awaken a conception in the Jewish mind of the Supreme Ruler of the universe being anything but a God for the Jews only.

The book of Amos, as we find it in the Bible, contains interesting reading. It has suffered somewhat at the hands of the priestly redactors, and the last five verses of the book we can safely attribute to an author of later date.

Hosea takes a different view of God from that of Amos. Amos delivered his message at a time when, judging by externals, Israel was on the summit of prosperity. He addressed a people who thought they had every

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reason to believe themselves standing high in the favor of their God. Hence his denunciations, his dark forebodings were looked upon as the ravings of a fanatic, and he is advised by the priest of Bethel, "to flee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there." Hosea wailed and wept at a time when the shadow of impending doom was settling thick and fast about his country's future. Murder and treason were the commonest of crimes. The house of Jehu had gone down, because, as Hosea evidently believed, of the bloodthirsty and inhuman onslaught on the house of Omri that marked this king's accession to the throne. Hosea was no less severe than Amos in his denunciation of the corruption and vice, and the iniquitous practices against the poor, which seem to be the burden of all the prophetic writers of the Old Testament prior to the captivity. His threats of divine vengeance were fully as appalling as those of any of the others, but he was the first to introduce the conception that the complement of God's justice was love. His own domestic unhappiness, and the unquenchable love he bore for one, who, although notoriously unworthy, he

could not forget, suggested the hope and belief that a similar feeling of tender regard must actuate the great heart of his God, and that this feeling would eventually awaken an answering chord in the hearts of his people, whom he likens to his unfaithful wife. His pathetic pleading is evidence of this hope; but he sees no escape from God's justice except in a moral reformation that must change the entire content of their civil, political, and religious life.

Isaiah and Micah represented the prophetic interests and spirit of reform in the southern kingdom about the time that Amos and Hosea were threatening and pleading with the people of the north. Isaiah's mind was of a practical turn, and while he was a devoted and zealous adherent of Jehovah's cause, he was also a statesman of no mean ability. He evidently belonged to the highest class, — Jewish tradition makes him a priest of the king's house, — and consequently in position to know and understand the foreign and domestic policies, as well as the social conditions of his country. He recognized the fact that Syria was the political storm-centre of Western Asia during this period, and while he believed

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that the mighty forces which were shaping the destinies of the world were controlled by his God, he also believed in the necessity of employing to their fullest extent the methods of human diplomacy and statecraft. He saw in the rise and fall of the gentile nations the hand of his God, and their successes and predominating might impressed him with the idea that they were but fulfilling the purposes of his divinity. Hence he counsels submission and a conciliatory attitude toward the overwhelming power of Assyria, and with every faculty of his being opposes the intriguing, and what proves to be disastrous alliance, with Egypt and the smaller Syrian states. To him, however, the infatuation and folly of a century later were largely due. He may be accredited with that dogma, which took root and flourished after the destruction of the northern kingdom, that Jerusalem was the only dwelling-place of Jehovah. In the century previous Elijah had made the journey to Horeb in order to meet and commune with his God, at the home of that God, and while Israel was filled with sanctuaries where theophanies had occurred, and where the divine presence was believed to be vouchsafed, still

this ancestral God of the desert could be best communed with upon this sacred mountain. Up to the time of Isaiah, Mount Zion, while indeed an important sanctuary, was by no means preëminent above a hundred others scattered about the country. We may safely infer that it was largely through the instrumentality of the prophetic party led by Isaiah that Judah was safely tided through the perilous years that marked the invasion of Syria and Egypt by the Assyrian monarch Sargon. From the time of Ahaz (734 B. C.), Judah had been a vassal state, and had paid a heavy tribute to Assyria. There was, therefore, a strong party — a national party — that was using every means to influence the weak and vacillating Hezekiah to join the general uprising, headed by Egypt, against the Assyrian power. It was to the strenuous efforts of Isaiah and his influence over the king, we may safely conclude, that the loyalty of Judah to Assyria at this time was due, and also her happy escape from the ruin that overwhelmed Egypt and her sister states. Upon the death of Sargon, rebellion against the heavy burden of Assyrian rule again blazed forth, and this time all the labor and influ-

ence of Isaiah failed to prevent his country from joining the coalition. The effect upon Judah was disastrous. Forty-six of her towns were destroyed, and from that little land of about 1,500 square miles 200,000 of her people went into captivity. Still, Sennacherib failed to take Jerusalem, and, by what seemed to the people a miraculous intervention, abandoned the country. It was, undoubtedly, at this time that Isaiah put forth his dogma of the inviolability of Jerusalem, — this was the city of Jehovah, his dwelling, his own personal property, — and whatever might betide he would never allow its destruction, nor permit the domination of the heathen in this his habitation. The literary remains of this prophet are found in the book that bears his name in the Jewish canon from the first to the fortieth chapters, with notable exceptions found in the thirteenth, fourteenth, twenty-first, twenty-fourth to the twenty-seventh, thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, thirty-eighth, and thirty-ninth chapters. The balance of the book is now known to be the work of writers scattered along the three or four following centuries.

The message of Isaiah was similar to that

of Amos, Hosea, and Micah. The old religion of Israel exerted no restraining influence on the corruption, rapacity, and greed of the governing classes in their treatment of the poor. In all the story of the Israelitish people, as given us by their own historians, it is impossible not to note the entire absence of moral sense and unselfish purpose. There is religion on every hand, but it is a religion that ignores every principle and precept of honesty, of virtue, and every feeling of humanity. This moral degeneracy had become a national characteristic. It was the mission of the prophets to awaken to life and sensitiveness moral perception. This they strove to do by representing their God as a moral being, one who requires his people to love justice and mercy. On this basis Isaiah established his propaganda, and to his following he gave the name of "The Remnant." To his labors may be attributed the reforms that marked the reign of Hezekiah. That the flagrant abuses and immoral rites connected with the service of the temple were reformed, there can be no doubt; that these reforms did not wholly consist in the suppression of the cults of other gods, but were reforms within

the cult of Jehovah himself, there is no question. The venerable Nehushtan, which Hezekiah destroyed, was certainly an image intended to represent Jehovah, as we know from the ancient tradition that associates it with Moses himself.

In Micah the Morasthite appears the last of that group of prophets who preached and wrote during the eighth century B. C. Like Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, the burden of his polemic was denunciation against the national sins of rapacity, greed, and oppression of the poor and helpless. He says: "Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.

"And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage."

"And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel: Is it not for you to know judgment?

"Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones.

"Who also eat the flesh of my people, and

flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron.”

“Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.

“They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity.

“The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.

“Therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest.”

VII

DEUTERONOMY

FROM the death of Hezekiah (692 B. C.) to the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, a period of sixty-eight years, the voice of prophecy was silent. The Remnant, that constituted the following of Isaiah, was doomed to a long season of adversity, and the national party — the party of the old religion — was in the ascendant. During all this time we have no record of any prophet who dared antagonize governmental authority, and what we may believe was popular sentiment. Ancient customs and the ordinances of worship that had been established by David and Solomon were too firmly rooted to be set aside, and the destruction of ancient symbols, and the abolition of ancient practices that from time immemorial had been looked upon as consecrated by divine appointment, caused feelings of suspicion and alarm. Besides, the weak-

ness of Hezekiah, and the national misfortunes that attended his reign, created a widespread discontent with the innovations which he had attempted to introduce. The young King Manasseh was not slow in recognizing the impotence of his father's policy and the futility of antagonizing the might of Assyria, so that during his long reign of fifty-three years, he appears to have been a faithful vassal of that great power. Under the protection this relationship afforded, even while the tribute paid may have been a heavy drain upon the resources of the country, the peace and security assured, more than repaid it all, and in spite of the distorted view we are permitted to get of this monarch, in the short notice given in the book of Kings, we are fairly certain that the material prosperity of the kingdom was considerable. That he re-established the old order of things upon a basis similar to that of his great ancestor, Solomon, and that he enforced respect for, and compliance with, the ancient usages of the temple cults seems certain. On the whole, he appears to have been a king possessed of far greater ability than his father, and able to successfully guide the ship of state through

difficult and dangerous seas. For our knowledge of him we are indebted to those who regarded him as the incarnation of wickedness, and the fact that the prophetic party was able to successfully conspire against his son and successor, after a reign of but two years, would indicate that the old causes for discontent to which the existence of the prophetic party was due still remained.

We have the best of evidence that the changes that resulted from the triumph of the prophetic party, and the finding of the book of the law, were not moral but religious changes. It was not a moral reform, but a reformation — or perhaps we may say a revolution — in the religion of Israel. The scathing denunciations of Jeremiah, who is no less severe against the corruption and rapacity of his own day than were the older prophets against the same thing in theirs, show the same absence of moral sense under Josiah and his sons that characterized the older reigns. No better illustration of the truth of this condition can be afforded than in the treatment of their slaves as described in the thirty-fourth chapter of Jeremiah.

Josiah owed his elevation to the prophetic,

or priestly, party. Seated upon the throne when only eight years of age, and maintained there, as we well know, by that faction, his education and training would, of course, be attended to by these sectaries with the greatest care. Particular pains would be taken to impress upon his youthful mind the belief that his every interest would be subserved by his upholding theirs, which they were careful to identify with the religion of Jehovah. We have every reason to believe that the nucleus of the Deuteronomic laws was framed and prepared during the minority of Josiah, so that when he became of age and assumed the reins of government, the crusade against every other form of religion could be entered upon with the fullest assurance of success. It will be objected that the book of Deuteronomy as we know it contains a moral code. It contains just the sentiment of morality we might expect as the outgrowth of the tribal conditions from which Israel had emerged. We find that the relations and duties of man to man, and the personal conduct which constitutes morality, are expressed in the enactments that relate to duty to parents, the forbidding of murder, theft, bearing of false

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witness, adultery, and covetousness. But toward whom are these moral duties enjoined? Only toward their own nationality, the exception being made toward the stranger who seeks hospitality. Toward all others the obligation of the law requires unrelenting hostility, and toward the natives of the promised land death without mercy. No matter how carefully it may define the duties that one member of the commonwealth of Israel may owe another member, toward all other people it not only allows, but commands, the most inhuman treatment.

We might think this distorted moral perception the unavoidable concomitant of the early age in which this code appeared, due to immature, undeveloped faculties, such as we ought to expect in so early a people. But we have before us the code of Hammurabi, a code that antedates that of the Deuteronomist by more than seventeen hundred years, and in this compilation of the ancient laws and usages of Babylonia discriminating clauses against one nationality in favor of any other are conspicuously absent. Safeguards are put around the lives and property of every member of the body politic, regard-

less of their parentage or condition in life, and there is no word of denunciation, hate, nor any enactments of exclusion against any of the surrounding people. We have the best of evidence that this great people fully comprehended the ethical side of human life, and that they associated with their religion a morality that would compare favorably with our standards of the present day. This evidence rests upon the fact that Babylonia for a period of more than five thousand years existed as a homogeneous people, contented and happy under a system of government and religion practically unchanged. If any dependence whatever can be put upon the picture drawn by every prophet of Israel prior to the captivity, the very opposite of this condition prevailed in Canaan. The moral features which we have noted as part of the Deuteronomist's code were hoary with age before his day, as we know from their context, and allusions to the ancient customs and superstitions of the desert. The new features that so radically modified the cultus of Jehovah were religious features. They were, First, The doctrine of henotheism, that is, the exclusive worship of Jehovah, and the im-

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mutable decree that no Israelite should countenance or permit, so far as he could prevent it, the worship of any other deity upon the sacred soil. Second, The consecration of the tribe of Levi to the priestly office. Third, The establishment of Jerusalem as the only place where sacrifice could be offered and the ordinances of worship performed. Fourth, The abolition of images, asherahs, macebas, and all visible symbols of divine presence. Fifth, The establishment of rites and ceremonies in connection with sacrificial acts and priestly functions that would entirely change the character and significance of the ancient feasts. These were the principal points in the new departure; when we consider the far-reaching consequences of the enforcement of these new doctrines, we no longer wonder at the importance that the find of Hilkiah assumed in the eyes of succeeding generations. Hereafter only one God, and that God Jehovah, who had his habitation in the temple at Jerusalem, could be tolerated in Israel. Every high place where he had been worshipped since the occupation of the land by the Hebrew people must be demolished. The old order of things, the joyous feasts, the lev-

ity and license of the old days in which each community had its local altar and its local Baal, must be done away with, and all the country must gather at the altar of the Baal of Jerusalem. That these high places had been looked upon from most ancient times as proper worshipping-places for Jehovah we know, and that public sentiment revolted at their being looked upon as anything else, is evident from the attempt to incorporate the priests who officiated at these altars into the temple service. But the jealousy and selfishness of the temple priesthood prevented the fulfilment of this design, and they were obliged to be content with the menial and degrading offices about the temple which had hitherto been performed by slaves. From this cause grew up that distinction between the priests and Levites not contemplated in the book of Deuteronomy, but which found a place in the later Levitical law.

That the destruction of the sacred places and the sacred furnishings would breed discontent is certain. But Josiah was not content with the reformation of his own country. The moribund condition of Assyria left him practically a free hand, not only in Judah

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but also in the neighboring province of Samaria, and if we may believe the sacred record, he not only destroyed the high places there, but instituted a bloody persecution of the followers of other religious faiths. Neighboring people suffered from his intolerant zeal, so that when he met his death at Megiddo, a well-marked reaction was the result. To the prophetic party, who had expected that his zeal would ensure success in all his undertakings, the blow was a heavy one, but outside the priestly hierarchy, who had everything to lose by the downfall of their well-laid system, his untimely end must have been regarded as a token of God's disapproval of his policy.

Jeremiah appears to have had a conception of monotheism considerably in advance of his age; and we may conclude that the doctrine of unity as applied to the Godhead met his approval. It is also probable that the attempt to eliminate every form of syncretism from the concept of divinity by prohibiting the making of any image or likeness of deity, was in line with his thought. He appears to have regarded all such representations as idols, and their use in the exercise of worship

as idolatry. But dogmas and the observance of ritual were not mentioned in the list of requirements he puts forth as necessary for securing the favor and love of Jehovah. Israel must practise justice between man and man, and the oppression of the widow and the fatherless, of the poor and the helpless, must cease. This is the ultimatum that he proclaims. We may infer from the energy and character which marked the reign of Josiah that he somewhat improved social conditions; still, the dissatisfied, dissenting note that runs through the early messages of Jeremiah, delivered at a time when the king was busiest with his reformation, seems to force the conclusion that the erection of Jehovah's priesthood into a hierarchy, and the suppression of all other forms of worship, had failed to awaken sentiments of justice, humanity, and love of human kind, — the essentials of true reform such as Jeremiah demanded. That he was hated, persecuted, and derided by the sacred order, and that his office of prophet was disputed by a class of men attached to the temple, who claimed to be true prophets of Jehovah, are among the incidents of his life that he fully portrays.

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We must not suppose the Deuteronomy that we possess exactly like that read before Josiah by Shaphan the scribe. While the important parts and general idea remain unchanged, the book as we know it must be an expanded and, as we can detect in many instances, a greatly modified version of the original. The unity of the Godhead; the restriction of worship to one sanctuary; the organization of the priesthood upon a hierarchal basis; the legal provision made for the support of the ecclesiastical establishment, which had heretofore been provided for by the sovereign; priestly perquisites; the radical changes in the character and significance of sacrifice, which entailed the destruction of the old idea that all killing for food was a sacrificial act, and the partaking of such food a religious rite; the appointment of cities of refuge, made necessary by the destruction of God's altars scattered everywhere about the country, to which the right of asylum had always pertained, were probably all the essentials of Hilkiah's production. The covenant code, practically as we find it in the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-second chapters of Exodus, and which was, no doubt, a product

of the age that succeeded Isaiah, was incorporated with these innovations, and the whole dated back to the age of Moses, and his name is appended as the author. The old order of things, — how God had by his presence sanctioned the erection of altars and the establishment of his worship at Bethel, Shiloh, Peniel, Gibeon, Ramah, Nob, Gilgal, Dan, Beersheba, Shechem, and a hundred other places; how Elijah erected his altar and sacrificed on Mt. Carmel, and how Elisha built an altar and sacrificed his oxen on the spot where he first received his notice of divine appointment, — all in direct violation of such commands as we find in the twelfth chapter of Deuteronomy, are accounted for by the Deuteronomist on the ground of forgetfulness. That Mt. Zion had been selected by Jehovah as the only sanctuary for Israel, and that he had indicated his choice by manifestations which could not be misunderstood at the dedication of the temple by Solomon, Bible authorities would certainly have us believe; yet in the interim between these memorable occurrences and the finding the book of the law, an interval in which we know there was some literary activity, and that temple annals

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had been kept, when an unbroken line of high priests from Zadok to Hilkiah had conducted the cultus, occurs this wonderful lapse of memory. The truth is, and it can be easily demonstrated, that this change was not a re-pristination, but a change in which new and hitherto unknown elements were largely in the foreground. It was a change in which the sacred order that had had charge of the temple service at Jerusalem became not only the ecclesiastical head of the nation, but also the predominating factor in civil affairs.

VIII

JUDAISM

MIDWAY between Deuteronomy, the beginning, and Leviticus, the completion, of Judaism, stands Ezekiel, the prophet priest,—the St. Paul of the Jewish Church. He was a thorough-going theologian, an organizer of the highest type, able to see and appreciate all his opportunities. The humane and generous policy of Nebuchadnezzar had allowed the exiles to settle in one locality, and with tolerant unconcern ignored their social and religious customs; but their uncompromising and unsocial attitude toward the outside world then, as it has ever since, in every country in which they have been permitted to reside, rendered them objects of suspicion and dislike. The inevitable ostracism that resulted furnished the occasion for the exercise of just such abilities as Ezekiel possessed. Born a priest of the family of Zadok, he was not

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only in sympathy with all the theocratic innovations that Deuteronomy had inaugurated, but unhampered by any civil, military, or international care, he felt called upon to plan an ecclesiastical state — a new Jerusalem — in which every function of government and religion should be vested in his own family. The rights of the Levite, which in Deuteronomy were identical with those of the priest, were no longer to be recognized, but a subordinate and menial position was assigned him, because in predeuteronomic times he had served at the altars of the high places. Under the new régime there would be but little use for a king; still, a shadow of the ancient monarchy was permitted to exist in which a prince of the house of David would pose as sovereign, but bereft of every prerogative of sovereignty. He was to be provided for by an ample patrimony, so that none of the revenues that ordinarily support the state need be employed for secular purposes. Except for presiding, in some not clearly defined manner, at the religious observances outside the temple proper, and seeing that the hierarchy was not defrauded of any of its sacred dues, this figment of royalty appears functionless. There

was no place for him as legislator, for every human activity was covered by divine law; judicial functions were denied him, for the priesthood stood as the interpreters and expounders of the divine enactments; no executive arm could be needed, for in the new Jerusalem crime was to be unknown; and no wars were ever to disturb the peace of that holy city which was to be the eternal abode of God himself. It was not the palace, but the temple, around which the life of the community must centre. According to this plan the temple became too sacred a place for any but the priests and their servitors, the Levites, to enter. Even the king could not be allowed within the inner court. The Deuteronomic idea that Jehovah was to be the portion of this holy tribe, and that its members were to have no part in the distribution of the land, was modified so that a liberal portion of the best of the country was to become their heritage. Public sacrifice took on wholly an atoning character, although free offerings, expressive of thankfulness and love, were by no means to be refused. A more careful distinction between clean and unclean was to be enforced; the ritual was to be made more

elaborate, although nothing like the complex and ingenious formularies of the later Levitical schemes, which were devised upon every possible occasion to increase the revenues of the temple. In later ages, when the traditional origin of the law was unquestioned, the scheme of Ezekiel was looked upon with doubt and distrust by some; the many differences, the rough and unfinished aspects which his plan presented, when compared with the finished and elaborate structure of Leviticus seemed inexplicable if the Levitical scheme had been in existence from the days of Moses; but reverse the order of appearance, as the research of the present day has demonstrated to be the true order, and Ezekiel's framework of the ecclesiastical edifice shows in all the essential points of Judaism. Things impracticable, like the establishment of monarchical features and the division of the territory, could not be accomplished under the political conditions that prevailed, and were therefore ignored.

There is nothing in the writings of Ezekiel that would indicate acquaintance with the traditional history of Israel. He never once mentions Aaron as the ancestor of the priestly

guild, but it is always Zadok. He has nothing to say about Moses; he does not appear to know anything about the tabernacle, the ark, nor the altar and furnishings that occupy so important a place in the Levitical code.

Ezekiel was one of the captives transported to Babylon in the year 597 B. C. If we may believe Jeremiah, this contingent represented the best blood of the country; the princes, both of the royal family and the priesthood, as well as the skilled artisans, who must have constituted the respectable portion of the middle class, were forced to abandon their homes, their friends, and all their material interests. The same authority speaks most disparagingly of those who were left. He likens them to a basket of bad figs, not fit to be eaten. Nebuchadnezzar evidently hoped by removing the representative men of the nation effectually to discourage future acts of rebellion, and his magnanimity in assigning them to fertile lands, and allowing them a sort of local autonomy in their new home, inspired them with the hope that their captivity would be of short duration. But the event was interpreted in an entirely different manner by

those who had been permitted to remain in the land. They saw in their being passed over, and in the opportunities that came to them to occupy the places that had been made vacant, the hand of God as approving them, and as disapproving and punishing those who had been taken. Blinded by fanaticism, unable to see the enormity of their social and moral delinquencies, such as we have no record of in the history of any other people, they still had implicit faith in the inviolability of Jerusalem. Their God would never permit the destruction of his holy city and the temple. During the eleven years that intervened between the first capture of the city in B. C. 597 and its final and complete destruction in B. C. 586, both Jeremiah in Palestine and Ezekiel in Babylonia made every effort to stay the tide of rebellion. They seemed to realize the impotence of any power that could be arrayed against the might of Babylon. That the God in whom they believed, who loved and required justice and mercy, would interpose in behalf of their deluded countrymen, lost as they were to every sense of honor, justice, and humanity, they regarded as impossible. The event justified their expecta-

tions. For six years prior to the extinction of Judah as a state, Ezekiel had uttered his warning cry, and endeavored with voice and by pantomime to prepare the exiles for the impending catastrophe, and at the same time he sought to impress upon their minds that the cause of their misfortunes lay in their own moral degeneracy. It was the same old story that all the older prophets had told. When the blow had fallen, and there were no homes nor country to which to return, when despair had taken possession of the captives, who saw in this event the wreck of all their hopes, then Ezekiel appeared in the rôle of comforter. His warnings and his arraignments of their past conduct had been most unwelcome, but when events proved the correctness of his prophecies, those who still clung to the religion of Jehovah turned to him for comfort and guidance. This was the opportunity to which we have alluded, and which he did not fail to improve to its fullest extent. With national life destroyed, he saw that the integrity of the Jewish community could only be preserved by ecclesiastical devices, and the result was the scheme that we have already outlined. He emphasized the

moral features of the Deuteronomic code, but his hope and expectation of the success and permanence of his system depended upon the rigid and uncompromising character of the legal and ritualistic observances, the neglect of which constituted the most heinous of crimes. He has no thought nor hope beyond the material interests of this life. The new Jerusalem he so vividly paints, while its natural surroundings are to be radically changed, beautified, and adorned, is still to be the Jerusalem of his boyhood days. The useful and beneficent character of the rivers and canals of Babylon, teeming with fish, serving as channels of trade and means of fruitfulness, suggested the idea that the brook Kidron might be magnified so as to make the holy city a seaport town, through the valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea; yet even in this glorious picture he does not forget to reserve the salt marshes from which his people must get their salt. That there is no purpose in God's toleration of the heathen world except to serve as a useful means for the aggrandizement of the Jew is also another feature of his divine vision. In order to vindicate the majesty and loving-kindness of Jehovah toward his people,

it will be necessary that a slaughter of the armies of Gog take place, so great that it will take seven months to bury the dead, and the captured arms will suffice the Israelitish nation for firewood for seven years.

Like the period that had intervened between the age of Isaiah and that of Jeremiah, when prophetic voices seem to have been silent, so between Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah appears a similar period of silence. We have, however, the best of evidence that it was a period full of literary activity by the priestly class in Babylon. It was the age in which the office and vocation of scribe began to assume an importance in Jewish life second only to that of the priesthood. It was the period in which the books of the Old Testament canon, known to us as Judges, the Samuels, and the Kings, took on pretty nearly their present shape; the older material was being worked over to suit the changing views that contact with enlightened conditions and the exigencies of Israel's religion had opened up.

Among the vagaries that became settled beliefs with the Jews during and after the exile, was the belief that a Messiah would appear who would restore the pristine glory of

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David's house and kingdom. It had seemed to the waiting Israelites that he must come from the Davidic line, and imagination clothed him with all kingly attributes. These Messianic hopes had been suggested by the older prophets, and were fostered and accentuated by the utterances of the later schools. It had seemed incredible to the pre-exilic nation that God would allow his holy city — the chosen abode of his majesty and power — to be destroyed; but when the event transpired, when political organization had been obliterated, then religion came to the rescue, and their racial integrity was maintained by means of an ecclesiastical system. Still the memory of past prestige and power, as an important political factor among the people of Syria, filled them with an intense desire to see a restoration upon a political basis. Hope and expectation along this line filled the hearts of the exiles. When, therefore, the Unknown Prophet proclaimed Cyrus, the conquering King of Persia, as the promised Messiah, the Anointed of God, who was to be the liberator of the exiled people, the one to restore them to their homes and country, his message was received with murmurs of

disapprobation and unbelief. B. C. 538 Cyrus made his triumphal entry into Babylon, hailed as liberator not only by the foreign population, but even by a large portion of the native Babylonians themselves.

The fall of Babylon marks one of the most important epochs in the history of mankind. For many thousand years, probably not less than ten, a peculiar and healthy civilization had been developing upon the plains of Babylonia that has formed the basis upon which all subsequent civilization has been built. With religious and political institutions that had come down from the mists of antiquity practically unchanged, it had afforded to Western Asia millenniums of stable and prosperous conditions. About the seventeenth century B. C. Egypt, under the reign of Tahutimes I., succeeded in establishing Egyptian dominion over ancient Canaan, and for three hundred years was the predominating power in that land. The decline and extinction of Egyptian authority was followed by the rise of numerous small states, that for several hundred years enjoyed the glorious privilege of fighting each other, thus cultivating a large crop of tribal prejudice and conceit,

and accumulating an equally large stock of mutual hate. In the ninth century B. C. Assyria, daughter and heir of ancient Babylon, appeared upon the scene, and from this time on until the destruction of Nineveh, B. C. 606, was the predominating factor in Canaanitish and Syrian politics. With the fall of Assyria, the monarch of the new Babylonian empire became lord paramount of these countries, and in dealing with them pursued in a general way the policy that had been inaugurated by the Kings of Assyria. This policy had usually been to allow the native princes of conquered states to retain their thrones subject to the will of their suzerain, upon the payment of a stipulated yearly tribute. Rebellion or failure to pay this tribute was followed by setting aside the native governments, and the creation of the recalcitrant state into an Assyrian province. Further evidence of unrest, or desperate and protracted resistance to Assyrian arms, usually ended in the deportation of large bodies of these natives, the best and most influential of the land, to some distant part of the empire, and the introduction of an equally large contingent of loyal subjects to take their places. Such had been the

method pursued by Sargon upon the capture of Samaria, and in like manner Nebuchadnezzar deported the principal inhabitants of Judah in 597 B. C., and of Jerusalem upon its destruction in 586 B. C.

With the fall of Babylon the Semites ceased to be the dominant race in Western Asia, and the Aryans, with totally different conceptions of government and religion, assumed control. The change was a retrograde one. Under the system of old Babylon the king was regarded as the vicegerent of God, and he was restrained by certain immutable laws and customs from exceeding his prerogatives which he dare not disregard; the people were protected by written laws and ancient customs, the inviolability of which was guaranteed by the strongest covenant that religion could impose. With the advent of Aryan rule these guarantees of good government were swept away; everything depended upon the will or caprice of the sovereign, and an era of absolutism was inaugurated.

The policy of Cyrus regarding the religion of the people of his new dependencies was totally different from that of the Babylonian

monarchs. While their toleration was that of indifference, and they did not allow it as a factor in their management of subject nations, Cyrus recognized the tenacity with which a people clung to their gods and their religious beliefs, and that it was an easy and profitable way to gain their good-will and true-hearted allegiance by manifesting an interest in, and giving material aid toward, the maintenance of the various forms of worship. In an inscription of his that has been unearthed, he says: "The gods whose sanctuaries from of old have lain in ruins, I brought back again to their dwelling-places and caused them to reside there forever. All of the citizens of these lands I assembled, and I restored them to their homes." (Cyrus Cyl. 31-32.)

From the anxiety manifested by the exiles in the earlier part of the captivity to return to their homes and friends, but especially to the benefits and comforts derived from the exercise of their religious duties, it might at first sight seem that the general permission given by Cyrus would have been eagerly accepted, and that a large portion of the Israelitish exiles would have embraced the

opportunity. Indeed, so natural and seemingly conclusive is this view that the chronicler, writing about three hundred years later, assumes that this must have been the case, and proceeds to embellish a tradition of the return of Sheshbazzar, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and nine others (twelve in all), with a detailed account of a company that numbered about fifty thousand. It must be remembered, however, that a period of sixty years had intervened, a period sufficiently long for two generations to pass away. From what we know of the condition of these people in Babylonia, we can be certain that they had become identified with the material interests of the country, so that they formed rich and prosperous communities, that they had founded schools and become intellectually the head and brain of their race, and further, that Babylonian Jews continued to hold this exalted position until the favor of the Ptolemies, some two hundred years later, enabled the Alexandrian Jews to establish similar institutions that finally eclipsed those of Babylon.

In all probability no writer ever attempted to write history who drew upon his imagination for material to the extent that the chron-

icler drew upon his. That he was a person so devoted to the interests of the hierarchy that no event past, present, or future possessed for him the slightest value unless it could be made to subserve these interests, is the only conclusion that can be drawn from the product of his pen. The two chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah, are unquestionably the work of this author, who lived and wrote during the Greek period, probably between 280 and 250 B. c., at a time when Judaism had become fairly well crystallized. In the order of events as set forth by him, Cyrus, in the first year of his accession to the throne of Babylon, not only gave special permission to the exiled Jews to return to their own country, under the leadership of princes of their royal blood, but by a firman that furnished them with both protection and material assistance, he enjoined them to proceed to Jerusalem, and there immediately commence the rebuilding of their temple and the reëstablishment of their ancient worship. To further this purpose, he delivered into the hands of these princes the furnishings and paraphernalia of the cultus that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple of Solo-

mon. The Cyrus Cylinder, which we have quoted above, confirms the belief that this would be in accordance with his policy, and there is good reason to believe that a general exodus, headed by the princes of the Davidic line, would have met his approval. That there was no immediate response to his edict of freedom by the exiled Jews, we can feel quite certain from what we can gather from the Deutero-Isaiah, who scolds, and pleads, and bitterly complains of the general apathy of his countrymen concerning their return. We are also led to the same conclusion from the silence of both Haggai and Zachariah, neither of whom allude to any body of exiles who have come from Babylon, bearing rich gifts and the treasures of the first temple, and armed with plenary authority for the rebuilding of the house of God and the reestablishment of the ancient worship. That sometime between the accession of Cyrus, in 538 B. C., and the laying of the foundation of the second temple, in 520 B. C., an expedition headed by Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel did set forth is quite certain, because the latter, Zerubbabel, certainly appears in Jerusalem at this later date, and it is also extremely

probable that they did not come alone. Their rank and prestige as princes of the Davidic line would warrant the belief that a considerable retinue attended them, and also that a considerable number of those whose family ties or business interests did not prevent would avail themselves of this opportunity of becoming citizens of the new commonwealth of Israel. But what that number was, or who they were, or when the expedition set forth, are unanswered and unanswerable questions.

The lists furnished us by the chronicler in the book of Ezra are valueless, because these same lists are made to do duty a hundred years later in the enumeration of those found in the land by Nehemiah. The chronicler would have us believe that the exiles under Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel returned to a land entirely denuded of inhabitants,—to Jerusalem, a city that for fifty years had remained a desolate and uninhabited ruin. Now all this is intrinsically improbable; no country was ever so denuded of its inhabitants by any conquest that a considerable percentage of the native population did not remain. Allowing the widest estimate for those carried into captivity and those who migrated to

Egypt, still not more than one in five, and probably not more than one in ten, could have been taken, while it is entirely improbable that those destroyed by war and famine could have greatly exceeded in numbers those that went into captivity. Jeremiah tells us that the poor of the land, which in any and every country means a large majority of the population, were not taken; that the captains of the forces that were in the fields, Ishmael, Johanan, and Jonathan, the sons of Kareah, Seraiah, the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai, and Jezaniah, — they and their men, — returned to Gedaliah, who had been appointed governor of the land by Nebuchadnezzar, who had committed to his care the men, and women, and children, and poor of the land that were not carried away captive to Babylon. This Gedaliah was grandson of Shaphan, who read the book of the law found in the temple to King Josiah, a Jew of the Jews, and his selection as governor is proof of Nebuchadnezzar's kindly intent. We read further in the fortieth and forty-first chapters of Jeremiah that there were Jews, and we may infer from the text a considerable number, who, during the stress

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of war, had sought refuge in the neighboring states of Ammon, Moab, and Edom, who returned when peaceful conditions were again established. We also learn that as early as the assassination of Gedaliah, which took place within a few months from the destruction of the city, the ruined temple was being utilized for purposes of worship; and it is significant that the participants in this act, as described in Jeremiah xli. 5, were men from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria,—all towns of old Israel. It is extremely unlikely that the old altar at Jerusalem, which we have good reason to believe was, in the old temple, a projection of the original rock upon which the structure was built, ceased to be a revered and hallowed object. It is quite certain both Jews and Samaritans who remained faithful to Jehovah, during the seventy years that intervened between the destruction of the edifice and its rebuilding, were wont to assemble here, bringing offerings and incense in their hands to this the house of their God. So far as the land of Israel and Judah is concerned, there is an unbroken silence during these seventy years, and we can only judge of the period by the

imperfect glimpse we get in the beginning, and an equally unsatisfactory one that marks the epoch of the return.

It is evident that quite a portion of the exiles, especially those whose ancestors had been prosperous and influential in their native land, while they were most unwilling to relinquish the material advantages of Babylon for the uncertainties of a land in which unsettled conditions prevailed, and in which the Jewish people were subjected to many indignities, still had a sentimental regard for the old home of their race. Outside the aristocratic and priestly classes, who would have a strong personal interest in the rehabilitation of the Jewish state and religion, there were probably many devoted worshippers of Jehovah. These people undoubtedly contributed liberally toward the rebuilding of the temple and the reestablishment of temple worship, but it was the natives of the land — not of Judah alone, but of Samaria as well — to whom Haggai appealed, and to whom he promised wonderful exhibitions of God's power in their behalf. These utterances were made at a time when the youthful Darius was engaged in a life and death

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struggle with insurrections and conspiracies, that made the opening years of his reign full of doubt and uncertainty; when nations were being made and unmade in a day, and the air was tense with expectancy, and not the least among the expected things that were to happen was the elevation of Zerubbabel, as the promised Messiah, upon the throne of united Israel. The fall and sack of Babylon, however, by the forces of Darius, and the rapid successes of his arms in other parts of his empire, soon disillused the unhappy people, and it was at this juncture that Zerubbabel, the last scion of the house of David, vanishes from our view. Haggai also suddenly becomes silent; but Zechariah takes up the burden of prophecy and infuses new spirit into the work of rebuilding the house of God.

The value of the chronicler's work lies in the picture he paints of his own age; it reflects but little that is real besides this. Judaism had practically reached its full development; the hierarchy had complete and unhampered control of the lives and destinies of the Judean people, who by precept, threatenings, the dread engine of excommunication, and even, as we learn from Nehemiah,

by personal violence, confiscation of property, and death, had been sifted and refined to that degree that, for a Jew, disobedience to priestly dictation was an unimaginable offence. A light or flippant remark about the temple was blasphemy, punishable by death. In an atmosphere charged with such bigoted and intolerant ideas, and the practices they involve, with which our chronicler is fully in accord, he feels the necessity of ignoring, as far as possible, the facts that militate against his system, and of supplying appropriate data to establish its claims. He therefore distorts such historical facts as cannot be ignored, and gives entirely new renderings of the traditional material that forms the literary heritage of his race. He invents names, genealogies, and incidents in order to make a connected account of the past history of Israel, *such as must have been*, in order to give the necessary authority and force to present conditions. In accordance with this plan, the edict of Cyrus *must have been* followed by a large, a very general exodus of the Babylonian exiles. There are two reasons why this should be. First, because it is inconceivable that these pious exiles, who have

been impatiently waiting for seventy years for this hoped for opportunity, should ignore it, and second, he feels a necessity of accounting for the numerous population that occupied the territory of Judah as early as 520 B. C. He sees how important to the credibility of his story is an immediate beginning of the work of rebuilding the temple, and therefore has Zerubbabel lay the foundations in the second month of the second year (B. C. 537); then, as it was a historical fact that could not be ignored, that the work was not commenced until B. C. 520, he introduces the fiction of hindrances by the people of the land, especially the Samaritans, because they were not allowed to participate in the enterprise. To support the fiction he makes use of letters purported to have been written by these adversaries to Artaxerxes, King of Persia, in which they charge the Jews with rebuilding the city walls and contemplating rebellion. Now the first Artaxerxes to rule over the Persian Empire after Cyrus, reigned from B. C. 464 to B. C. 424, a period of forty years, and until recently Jewish and Christian chronologists have fixed upon this reign as the one in which Nehemiah, as governor of Ju-

dah, did rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. It will be seen that these letters, which unquestionably belong to the age of Nehemiah, can hardly be made to do duty nearly a century earlier, at a time when Cyrus himself, who had ordered the rebuilding of the temple, was still alive, and would, without doubt, have seen that his orders were obeyed.

We have said that the book of Nehemiah was a product of the chronicler's pen. It contains material, however, that purports to be memoirs of that distinguished Jewish layman, written by himself. The internal evidence, supported at many points by historical facts and probabilities, leads us to believe that these memoirs have come down to us in a sadly mutilated state; that the grossest kind of substitution has been practised in order to minimize as much as possible the credit that belongs to Nehemiah, for the radical and efficient measures that resulted in fully developed Judaism, — measures that only a royal governor, armed with plenary authority, could enforce. In the chronicler's age, some two centuries later, the sacred character of this system was unquestioned. The belief that Judaism was a repriming of ancient Mosa-

ism effected through the instrumentality of the priesthood, under the lead of Ezra, had been foisted upon the easily duped Israelites. It is evident that those who remained in Babylon, who for reasons not difficult to understand neglected to avail themselves of the opportunity of return, became the advocates of stringent separation from the gentile world, a stricter observance of the Sabbath, the rite of circumcision, and an insistence upon ritual and temple service. They became the exponents of such an all-round exclusiveness as would render them a pure and holy people, that is, uncontaminated by contact with the non-Jewish world, all of whom were offensive to Jehovah, and consequently unclean (unholy). These rigid and uncompromising doctrines found a considerable body of adherents in Judea, which was being continually augmented by returning exiles, but with a large majority of the permanent residents, especially those who were the well-to-do and influential in both social and priestly circles, more liberal sentiments prevailed, and alliances with surrounding people became a common custom. These neighbors, especially the Samaritans, were identified as worshippers of

Jehovah, and his shrine at Jerusalem was a common gathering-place for purposes of worship. Left to themselves there is little doubt that it would have been only a question of time when the holy city and the temple service would have become the common property and common care of the people who occupied the ancient limits of Judah and Israel. To the Jews of the dispersion this tendency was most distasteful; their knowledge of Jerusalem was derived chiefly from the idealizing memories of their ancestors. They felt that the restoration promised by their prophets, by which the old rights, privileges, and material advantages of which these ancestors had been deprived, must be restored to them, — or at least to only those of pure Jewish blood. It was repugnant to all their feelings of justice and equity that strangers should be allowed to share in these priceless benefits. Filled with these views, entirely imbued with a spirit of devotion to the cause of Jehovah and his native land, Nehemiah seized the opportunity his position at the court of the Persian king presented, and obtained an appointment as governor of Jerusalem and a small tract of country immediately surround-

ing it. This subdistrict of Judah contained considerably less than 400 square miles, and was the most desolate and barren part of Palestine; its only claim to any importance whatever resided in the sacred character of the city Nehemiah had so earnestly besought permission to restore. Filled with a zeal that knew no bounds, keen, energetic, self-reliant, and wise, he made use of all the means the little district afforded, and accomplished his work of restoration before revealing the well-laid plan of exclusiveness, — the principal and most important object of his mission.

With the city surrounded by walls so that ingress and egress could be controlled, supported by the soldiers of the Persian king, and a greatly increased party in sympathy with the measures he proposes, he proceeds to inaugurate his reform. First and foremost, no person not a full-blooded Jew could participate in the rights and benefits of Jewish citizenship. Second, all entangling alliances must be avoided, especially those of marriage with non-Jewish people. Third, all Jews that had formed such alliances must forthwith renounce them, that is, separate from and entirely discard such wives and

their children. Fourth, strict observance of the Sabbath, in which no work nor business of any kind would be allowed. Fifth, the organization of temple service upon the plan outlined by Ezekiel; the absolute sanctity of the temple and the priesthood, and the imposition of tithes to support the cultus. That these measures met with vigorous protest from the respectable portion of the community, we have ample testimony, but it is testimony as seen through the chronicler's distorted vision. The book of Ruth, a product of this age, voices this protest in a very beautiful manner, but the energy of Nehemiah, backed by official authority and military power, was sufficient to override all protest. Those who refused to conform to the infamy of abandoning their families, suffered excommunication, which entailed loss of property, blows, and even death. The first fruits of these bigoted and intolerant measures was the Samaritan schism and the building of a rival temple upon Mt. Gerizim. The feeling of mutual fellowship and kindred interest in the sanctuary at Jerusalem, that had existed between Jew and Samaritan since the rebuilding of the temple, was turned into feelings

of bitterest hate, and there is abundant reason for believing, as asserted by Josephus, that many of the people, including a considerable number of the priesthood, seceded and joined the Samaritan community.

The chronicler paints an entirely different picture. According to his version of the matter, it was not Nehemiah at all that instituted the reforms (as they are called) we have just noted, but Ezra the priest, — a ready scribe in the law of Moses. We are given to understand that it was by miraculous intervention. “The hand of the Lord his God was upon him so that the king granted him all his requests.” “Upon the first day of the first month of the seventh year of Artaxerxes began he to go up to Jerusalem, and he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month of the seventh year of the king.” There were three kings named Artaxerxes who reigned over the Persian Empire, and the one tradition has connected with this event was the first to bear that name. His regnal years were 464 to 424 B. C. This would make the expedition of Ezra occur 457 B. C. He appears at Jerusalem, according to the chronicler’s account, thirteen years before Nehemiah, who in his

memoirs asserts that it was in the twentieth year of (presumably) the same king from whom he obtained the office of governor and permission to rebuild the city walls. To credit the chronicler's story means the stultification of our reason. There is good and sufficient ground for the favors shown Nehemiah. He was a favorite of the king; one whose presence and attention was pleasing to the monarch, who, probably a kindly dispositioned man, would take delight in conferring pleasure upon his faithful servant; we can safely infer that the ample means of his own that Nehemiah was able to use for the benefit of his cherished schemes, were derived from the bounty of his master, yet how poor, mean, and contemptible are the favors he receives when compared with the regal bounty heaped upon Ezra.

The firman of Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, scribe of the law of the God of heaven, confers upon this Jewish priest the most extraordinary powers, and a revenue such as Solomon in all his glory had no conception of. It heaps upon him the silver and gold that the king and his seven counsellors insist upon contributing, also such

as can be obtained from the whole province of Babylon, and upon all the treasurers of the province (called) Beyond the River (which means nothing less than the whole of Syria) it empowers Ezra to draw for fabulous amounts. It also places in his hands authority to appoint judges and justices in all this vast domain to judge all the people, and to instruct such as are not conversant with the law of his God; and all such as do not obey this law are to be punished by death, banishment, confiscation, or imprisonment. It further forbids the tax-gatherers of this province from laying any tax, tribute, or toll upon any priest, Levite, singer, porter, Nethinim, or minister of the house of his God.

According to the chronicler, Ezra met with but little opposition in installing his system. To be sure he represents him as finding (much to his astonishment and disgust) "that the people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the people of the land, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites," all of which people, except the

Ammonites, Moabites, and Egyptians had disappeared from Palestine several centuries before. Ezra's horror so dramatically expressed is accounted for in Ezra, 9th chapter and 2d verse. "For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and the rulers hath been chief in this trespass."

As the chronicler's story runs, Ezra made a proclamation that all the children of the captivity should gather at Jerusalem within three days. "That whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and elders, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away." The answer to this proclamation was the assembling of all the Jews at Jerusalem. Ezra proceeded to paint the awful sin and danger the people incurred by these foreign alliances, and the result of his presentation of the matter was that the people as one man bound themselves, in the strongest manner possible, to abide by the decision of the law as expounded by Ezra. There is no hint that

this far-reaching innovation, which, according to the narrative, deeply affected the domestic life of a numerous body of the Jewish people, met with the slightest opposition. The innumerable instances that filled their ancient history, of the connubium with every people with whom they had come in contact; the fact that the ancestress of the original tribe of Judah was a Canaanitish woman; that the wife of Joseph was an Egyptian; that Moses married a Midianite; that the great-grandmother of David was a Moabite; that every king from Saul to Zedekiah had married foreign wives; that the Kenites, who formed a considerable part of the tribe of Judah, had no strain of Israelite blood in their veins — all counted for nought — was wholly ignored, and so far as we can learn not a voice was raised in protest — all was accomplished without difficulty. The strangest part of this strange story is, that thirteen years later, when Nehemiah appeared upon the scene, not a memory even of all this had survived. Nehemiah found the city divided; the principle of exclusiveness had indeed taken root, but not with the permanent and what we may designate the reliable part of the people. He

came as the exponent of this principle, and by his character and position gave it *éclat*; but vigorous and determined opposition met every measure he proposed, and the result was the Samaritan schism.

In examining the books of Ezra and Nehemiah we are struck with the fact that in Ezra no mention is made of the mission and achievements of Nehemiah; his name is barely mentioned; while in that part of the book of Nehemiah which is made up of his memoirs, that is, that part in which the narrator appears in the first person, not the slightest allusion to any such person as Ezra can be found. Could this have been possible had the two men been associated in any such way as the chronicler describes?

That the work of Nehemiah gave such an impetus to the doctrines of exclusiveness and devotion to law and ritual as to culminate in fully developed Judaism cannot be doubted. But to the chronicler the idea of development could not for a moment be entertained. His system had come from the hand of God perfect in all its details, and had been made known to the children of Israel by Moses without a flaw. Its reintroduction into Judea must

have been in accordance with the divine plan, and it was inconceivable that any one but a member of the priesthood could have been permitted to carry this design into execution. Hence the creation of Ezra, and the amplification of Nehemiah's history, and its transposition to that representative of the holy order, all of which was pure and unadulterated invention. Ezra was the personification of what afterward became pharisaism. The guild of scribes, derived undoubtedly from that portion of the priesthood that were not Zadokites, formed a nucleus about which gathered this uncompromising sect, — whose name has become the synonym of unbending sectarianism, self-righteousness, and devotion to legalism and formality. It was this element that rallied about Mattathias, the first Hasmonean, and their zeal contributed more than anything else toward the wonderful and glorious success of that illustrious family, and it was also their hostility in after-years that accomplished the overthrow of the Hasmonean power. Rigid conformity to the letter of the law was in their estimation the only thing to be considered; they were an exclusively religious sect that knew no political

interests. Their motto was: The law must be fulfilled, even if Israel is ruined by it; and when the office of high priest became the hereditary prerogative of a family not of Zadok, the most vital interests of their country were as nothing compared with the importance of maintaining the priestly law unbroken. In pharisaism appears the finished results of the labors of Nehemiah.

In all this regard for law, this formalizing and defining the minutest particulars of ritual observances, the numberless tabus enjoined, no place is found for moral or spiritual activity, — not a point on which could be outlined a working plan for the amelioration of human misery, nor, except along theologic lines, the slightest interest in the diffusion of useful knowledge; no thought except for the law and the perfect fulfilment of its innumerable exactions.

Very different appears the Zadokidæ, — the national party that in the time of Christ were known as Sadducees. The name originated from the high priesthood, — the sons of Zadok. After the return and the rebuilding of the temple, the high priests were secular as well as ecclesiastical heads of the Jew-

ish community, and as such, to some extent at least, were obliged to conform to the ideas and usages of the world in the administration of their political duties. The natural and commendable desire on the part of those who had the interests of their people at heart to administer these affairs in a wise and politic manner made it necessary that the strict rendering of the Pentateuchal code should at times be liberally interpreted or quietly ignored. Thus there grew up the sentiment, tacitly acquiesced in by the better class of the people, that where political necessities came in conflict with divine enactments, country must be considered before religion. This sentiment was the direct antithesis of pharisaism. There were other differences of a doctrinal nature that developed. There was an oral law accepted by the Pharisees as equally binding with the written code, — a Mishna said to have been given by Moses; an elaborate system of angelology; the doctrine of a future life, in which there were rewards for the righteous and punishment for the ungodly; all of which was ignored by the Sadducees.

The conquests of Alexander meant far more to Western Asia than mere political

supremacy. The Hellenizing spirit that actuated every Greek who participated in these conquests produced the most profound results in methods of thought and the trend of ideas, and gave a tremendous impetus to the speculative philosophies of the ancient world. In all the desirable localities of Alexander's Asiatic empire Greek cities sprung up, and in the old centres of population the Greek element often predominated and became points from which radiated the culture of Hellas. But they in their turn did not escape the modifying influences of Asiatic thought, and especially Asiatic religion. In the very midst of this seething ferment of religio-philosophical speculation, Judaism, in Judea, stood like a rock in a stormy sea. The effort at Hellenizing the Jews, which reached a climax in the insane persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes served only to strengthen the defences of Judaism. These persecutions furnished the timely opportunity for the appearance of the Maccabean family, whose glorious fight for their country and religion constitutes by far the brightest page in Israelitish history. It is true pharisaism won, but it was pitted against the lowest, most degrading tyranny

that ever cursed the world, and the cause was a righteous one. By this victory Judaism, with all its rigid features was saved, and the sect of Pharisees continued to be the controlling factor in Jewish life down to the final destruction of the city.

With the Jews of the Dispora, however, Judaism underwent radical and far-reaching changes. The doctrine of rigid conformity to the divine law, which specified Jerusalem as the only place where God's altar could stand, and where the ordinances of religion could be administered, when it had fairly taken root in its native Judean soil became a tree of sturdy growth. The cultus, and all the sacred associations of this city of God, tended to preserve unimpaired the original sanctity of these divine canons; but with these ordinances in abeyance, as they must be with those separated by long distances from their native land, other means must be employed to keep alive a knowledge and holy regard for their religion. In Babylon this had been achieved by the strictness with which the exiles had kept by themselves, made easy at first by their helpless and hopeless condition; by the rite of circumcision; by strict

observance of the Sabbath; and by the practice of assembling and listening to the reading of the law, or exhortations from their leading men. With them, so far as we can judge, proselyting was unknown. During the Greek period, however, there arose two new and important cities that became world-wide centres of trade, political influence, and the enlightened culture of the Hellenes. These were Alexandria, the capital of the Ptolemies in Egypt, and Antioch, the seat of the Seleucid power in Asia. Both of these dynasties sought to colonize important sections of their capitals with Jews, and gave them therein many and valuable privileges. The result was that whereas in Babylon they had been poor and despised exiles, in Alexandria and Antioch they became immediately favored and prosperous colonists. In other cities scattered about their vast domains, Jewish communities were also planted and flourished. From these conditions soon arose a system of devotional exercises, in which the offerings were not living creatures suffering vicariously for the transgressions of humanity, but prayers, hymns of praise, catechetical teachings, and the study of the divine law and the

prophets. This sacred literature soon began to be looked upon as a mine from which could be extracted all manner of mystical wisdom; even the commonest statements were soon regarded as veiling some hidden truth, and this practice of exegesis soon developed a class of doctors and learned men, who as early as the third century B. C. had become leaders of the synagogue worship. The institution of the synagogue fully accounts for the bond that held together the Jews of the ancient world. They were a nation more widely dispersed than any other, except the Greeks, and, not unlike the Greeks, their national conceit served as an impervious wall separating them from the heathen, and preserving their racial identity; but they, both individually and as communities, kept in touch with each other through the means this institution afforded. These meeting-places were where the Jews received news of their own faith from distant lands. There strangers of their own race were hospitably received and entertained; there they made new acquaintances, and received news of absent friends, — for the synagogues corresponded with one and another and exchanged letters of recommendation.

The changes wrought in Judaism in the six centuries from the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and its final overthrow by Titus, were many and marked. With the old prophets, and even Ezekiel and the second Isaiah, Jehovah was God of the living only, — he had no use for the dead. He was God of the Israelites, — a very powerful and mighty God, but only one among a multitude of others that were divinities for other nations. The greatest conceivable blessings that could come to man were long life and temporal prosperity. Morality only so far as it was conducive to these ends found a place in the creed of early Judaism. Holiness possessed no meaning except conformity with the outward forms, the ceremonial observances, and the rigid tabus of the Deuteronomic law. In the interim between the age of Josiah and Christ, Judaism in Judea grew and developed along the rigid ceremonial lines, but the genius and spirit of the system underwent radical changes. During the Persian period the influence of the Babylonian Jews was paramount, and it was impossible that the advanced conceptions of God, the nature and constitution of the universe, and

the destiny of man, as taught by the Zoroastrian faith, should not have made a profound impression upon the thinkers of the Jewish race. Indeed, we know that the tenets of later Judaism were saturated with all the essential dogmas of Zoroaster. But Judaism did not remain a unit; in Judea alone there arose three principal sects, while with the Dispōra, the modifying influences of contact with other religions tended to create differences of opinion that time served to increase. All, however, drew their inspiration from the law of Moses.

That the Jews were faithful and efficient supporters of the kings whose clients they became, appears to be one of the well-attested facts of history; but it is equally well attested that they were hated and despised by the people of every country in which they found lodgment. The requirements of their religion forced them to regard as pollution contact with their gentile neighbors; it enjoined a visible and marked disapprobation of everything that was looked upon as sacred by the gentile world, prohibiting even a respectful attitude toward their divinities, — but more than all else, the racial characteristic of inor-

dinate greed and unscrupulous method in their business transactions accounts for what in our day is called the anti-Semitic feeling, that for the past two thousand years has been universal. This feeling of hatred found expression in the works of all, or nearly all, of the pagan writers who mentioned this race, from Mantheo to Pliny. To these various aspersions Jewish writers sought to reply, and in order to do so did not hesitate to expand the original writings of the Greek historians, interpolating such statements as they thought might improve the respectability of their nation. Kent, in his "History of the Jewish People," says, "The deception in some cases must have succeeded, for they issued a great number of such writings, even putting verses into the mouths of the most famous Greek poets, like Æschylus, Sophocles, and Meander. Often the forgeries were very skilful, genuine and spurious verses being artfully intermingled. Later, they even introduced a Jewish prophecy in the mouth of the heathen Sybil." During the Persian period occurred a change in the language of the Syriac people, and the ancient Hebrew tongue, except for sacred purposes, became obsolete. The

new tongue was the Aramaic, and the Aramaisms found in some of the later books of the Bible, like Esther, Daniel, and others, are useful in determining their date. Still later, during the Greek and Maccabean periods, the Greek tongue began to be the prevailing language, and versions of the Hebrew Scriptures in Greek began to appear. The fable of the Septuagint is a fair illustration of the manner in which the Jewish writers sought to add importance to their history and their literature.

I have alluded to the influence of Zoroastrianism upon Judaism. The doctrines of the former, so far as they relate to God and his heavenly court, representing the principle of light and goodness; to Satan and his court, representing the principle of darkness and evil; and the eschatology, had been incorporated almost bodily into the dogmas of the prevailing sects of Judaism everywhere; and at Jerusalem the minutiae of priestly requirements, covering almost every activity of life, were no doubt derived largely from that adjunct of the Zoroastrian religion, — Magianism.

There developed, however, in Greece, West-

ern Asia, and especially in Alexandria in Egypt, two new and hitherto unknown elements that were destined to revolutionize the religions of the world, both Greek and barbarian. These elements were altruism and asceticism. More than all the speculations concerning God, or a future life, they broadened the field of religious activity. The first introduced a *raison d'être* for religion, while the last prescribed rules whereby moral and exemplary conduct became one of the essentials of a religious life. The usual theory concerning the source of these important principles has been that they originated from the life and teachings of Christ, but the evidence is conclusive that religious communities built upon them as fundamental principles were fully established, and were in flourishing condition at Alexandria, Antioch, and other Grecian cities, and that they were the essential tenets of one of the three Judaic sects more than two centuries before the age of Christ.

The true source of these two elements was Buddhism. In the seventh century B. C. a most remarkable man appeared in the Indian peninsula, and became the founder of a religion whose broad foundation was unselfish

devotion to the cause of human weal, and to such healthful and temperate restraints upon the appetites and passions as would serve to eliminate from human character all selfish interests. He did not base his religion upon any supernatural revelation, but solely upon man's knowledge of the nature of things, and inferences drawn therefrom. Still he accepted as a matter of course the traditions of the old faith in which he had been born, so far as they related to cosmological questions and the destiny of man, and especially that peculiarly Indian doctrine, — that the soul of man is a divine emanation that has become inextricably entangled with matter, and hence is doomed to an endless round of existence filled with pain, sorrow, and death, and consequently nought but evil. To escape this evil had been the study of numerous schools of philosophy that filled his land prior to his birth, and most rigorous asceticism had been practised, with the hope that deliverance might be effected through this means; but there had apparently been no thought given to altruism as a means to this end. Buddha was the first to advance this idea, and formulate a system, by which he believed this way

of escape could be accomplished. He lived to see his country filled with the followers of his doctrines, and to outline in a general way the polity of the future church. After his death, churches were established and ecclesiastical orders instituted, and especially have these last been copied in every detail by the monachism of all subsequent ages, in every country where such institutions are known. The following, taken from King's "The Gnostics and Their Remains," will explain the presence and prevalence of these Indian beliefs in the regions of Greek dominion:

"The spirit of this religion" (Buddhism) "was the spirit of proselytism; the Buddhists from the very beginning sent out their missionaries (some of whose narratives, full of interest, are still extant and have been translated from the Chinese) with all the zeal of the old propaganda. From the mainland they converted Ceylon, Japan, and the recesses of Tartary; and penetrated into regions where their former presence and tolerated existence are now little dreamed of. That Buddhism had been actually planted in the dominions of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies (Palestine belonging to the former)

before the end of the fourth century, at least, before our era is shown by a clause in the Edicts of Asoka. This prince was grandson of Chandragupta (the Sandracottus of the Greeks, contemporary and friend of Seleucus I.), who, at the head of an army of 60,000 men, had conquered all India within the Ganges. Asoka, at first a licentious tyrant, had embraced the newly preached doctrines of Buddhism, a Brahminical Protestantism, and propagated them by persuasion and by force through the length and breadth of his immense kingdom, with the usual zeal of a new convert."

The Edicts referred to are graven on a rock tablet at Girnur in Guzerat. To quote the words of the Indian archæologist Prinsep, to whom the discovery is due (Article XVII., "Indian Antiquities"): "I am now about to produce evidence that Asoka's acquaintance with geography was not limited to Asia, and that his expansive benevolence toward living creatures extended, at least in intention, to another quarter of the globe, that his religious ambition sought to *apostolize Egypt*, and that we must look hereafter for traces of the introduction of Buddhism into

the fertile valley of the Nile, so productive of metaphysical discussions from the earliest ages. The line to which I allude is the fifth from the bottom. 'And the Greek king (Yoniraja) besides, by whom the Chapta (Egyptian) Kings Ptolemaios, and Gonkakenos (Antigonus Gonatas) have been induced to allow that both here and in foreign countries everywhere the people may follow the doctrine of the religion of Devanipya, wheresoever it reaches.' "

The existence of bodies, like the Therapeutæ in Egypt or the Essenes in Judea, whose monkish habits and austere lives were an exact reduplication of the monastic orders of Buddhism, would be ample evidence that somehow these institutions of the Farther East had invaded and found permanent lodgment in the empire of the Greeks, but the Edicts of Asoka fully explain the methods by which this was accomplished. Whatever the apostles of Buddhism may originally have taught, it does not appear that the theological conceptions and eschatological features of later Judaism were materially affected; their influence appears in the moral features we have noted above; but outside of Judaism innu-

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merable sects sprung up in which all the changes that could be rung by combinations of the religions of India, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Egypt, and Rome were launched upon the world.

Of the Essenes M. Renan says: "The Essene was a monk who had his rules, his superiors, his novitiate, his monastery, and his vows. All men of the community called each other brethren. They at first admitted men only; the only penalty for violating discipline was expulsion. Their garb was white; all goods were in common; those who united themselves with the order gave it all their property. Their common interests were confided to managers of well-known thrift. The order prescribed for the daily life of the brethren was carefully laid down, and in all respects resembled the rules enforced in a monastery. At sunrise they had prayer; then the brethren were set to various tasks by their superiors; then came the midday meal; then more hours for labor; then supper. Their most anxious care was for cleanliness and decency; their ablutions were frequent. At meal-time, after a bath of purification, they met together in a hall, where no one not a

member of the order was allowed, except on rare occasions and by special permission. Before entering this hall each man cast about him a mantle of white linen; silently and reverently they arranged themselves along the table; before each man stood a loaf and a bowl containing his food for the day; the priest prayed before they ate, and no man might taste anything before prayer; after the repast the priest prayed again, the brothers each returning thanks to God for their food. This rite more than any other impressed those who sought acquaintance with the Essenes, among whom we may number Philo and Josephus. Any stranger permitted to be present was struck with awe and respect. Their hall seemed a real temple; the meal a religious service, for no clamor nor noise was heard; if compelled to speak, they did so in whispers."

They had their sacred books besides the law and the prophets. There is strong evidence to support the belief that they possessed a literature that was the original from which the Christian Gospels were derived,—none other than the traditional histories of Krishna and Buddha. Neither Philo nor Josephus

makes mention of any Messianic hope being cherished by the Essenes, although this hope was the stay and support of all other classes of Jews. With them the hope had been accomplished, — the Messiah had come. They were men of pure morals, and furnish us with the first known instance, outside of Buddhism, of combined thought and effort for the good of others. They did not sever their connection with the temple at Jerusalem; but rejected bloody sacrifices, presenting only offerings to which the idea of vicarious atonement could not be attached.

The principal place of their abode was on the shore of the Dead Sea, near Engedi, but they had communities in other places, especially in the larger towns of Syria and Egypt, where they welcomed their brethren, to whom on all occasions they were bound to exercise hospitality. In this sect we see incipient Christianity. In Egypt they were known as Therapeutæ (Healers), prototypes of the Christian Scientists of the present day. In Antioch they were first known as Christians. John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth were both members of this body.

IX

CONCLUSION

THOSE who wrote history in ancient times were, almost without exception, impelled to do so, not from a desire to record an unbiased statement of happenings as they really occurred, but to present such a view of the things they were cognizant of, and especially what tradition had handed down, as to give weight and currency to institutions and dogmas with which they were in the fullest sympathy. This was especially the case with the Jews, whose literature was wholly in the hands of a class identified with the priestly; and whose productions, therefore, both for the present and the past of their race and religion, reflected priestly ideals only. The findings of the buried literature of Babylonia, Egypt, and Syria, together with their monumental remains, and also a mine of information found in Jewish literature itself by means

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of the critical methods of the present day, have not only disclosed the absolutely unreliable character of the traditional history of Israel, but also in the most unqualified manner shown us the utter want of probity and the instincts of honesty in these sectaries, — its authors.

There are two views of the rise, development, mission, and importance to mankind of the Israelitish nation. First, the traditional view — which is also the prevailing one — that this people rose from a single progenitor, who had been divinely called to become the ancestor of a divinely appointed race; that this race developed along lines divinely laid down, so that in the fulness of time they might accomplish their divine mission, which was the introduction to the world of the only divine religion, and that in consequence of these premises the Israelitish nation is by far the most important that has ever appeared upon earth. The other more recent view is, that Israel rose in precisely the same way, subject to exactly the same laws of natural growth and development that marked the rise and progress of the other nations by which Israel was surrounded, and to whom it was

ethnically allied; that the children of Israel had not been the especial favorites of heaven, nor in any sense divinely led; that they had no divine mission to perform; and that the importance with which they have been accredited is due to a false and unwarranted assumption that can be easily shown to have no foundation in fact. All the premises in the first case are based upon the Hebrew Scriptures; outside of these Scriptures, not a scrap survives to substantiate a single claim.

The value of this literature is well set forth in an opinion, which we will quote, from Dr. Julius Wellhausen, in his "Prolegomena to the History of Israel." Probably no investigator is better versed in the matter he attempts to explain, nor better equipped with the critical and judicial acumen necessary for a true appraisal of the subject in hand.

"The Jews had no respect for their ancient history; they rather condemned the whole earlier development, and allowed only the Mosaic time along with its Davidic reflex to stand; in other words, not history, but ideal. The theocratic ideal was, from the exile onward, the centre of all thought and effort, and it annihilated the sense of objective truth, all

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regard and interest for the actual facts as they had been handed down. It is well known that there never have been more audacious history-makers than the rabbins. But Chronicles afford sufficient evidence that this evil propensity goes back to a very early time, its root, the dominating influence of the law, being the root of Judaism."

We will append below "Growth and Approximate Dates of the Old Testament and Apocryphal Literature," taken from a tabulated form found in Kent's "Student's Old Testament" ("Beginnings of Hebrew History"). He divides the literary life of the Israelitish people into five periods as follows:

- | | | |
|---------|---------------------|--|
| First, | B. C. 1500 to 1050. | Primitive Age of Song and Story. |
| Second, | B. C. 1050 to 750. | Creative Age of Poetic Composition and Prophetic Narration. |
| Third, | B. C. 750 to 586. | Classical Age of Prophetic, Priestly, and Wisdom Literature. |
| Fourth, | B. C. 586 to 400. | Golden Age of Composition and Compilation. |
| Fifth, | B. C. 400 to 1. | Retrospective Age of Imitation and Canonization. |
| | A. D. 100 | Completion of Old Testament Canon. |

FIRST PERIOD—PRIMITIVE AGE OF SONG AND STORY

B. C.

- 1500 to 1050. *Oral Traditions* regarding
The Origin of the Universe and Natural Phenomena.
The Beginnings of Human History and Civilization.

- The Origin of Relationships of Nations and Tribes.
 The Origin of Sacred Places and Religious Customs.
 The Origin and Experience of Ancestors of the Hebrews.
- 1150 to 1050. The Achievements of Israel's Early Champions and The Conquest and Settlement of Canaan.
- 1500 to 1050. During this period the legal status was determined by
 Inherited Semitic Institutions. Mosaic Precepts and Decisions.
 Traditional Precedents, Customs, and Laws.
 Their Sense of the Poetical was expressed in
 Inherited Semitic Myths and Songs, *e. g.* Epic of the Creation.
 Song of Lamech, and the Flood Epic in Gen.
 Popular Songs, *e. g.* Song of the Well in Num. xxi., 17, 18.
- 1200 to 1050. War Songs, *e. g.* Song of Triumph in Ex. xv. 1.
 Song of Deborah in Judges v.
 Popular Fables and Riddles, *e. g.* Jotham's Fable in Judges ix.
 Samson's Riddles in Judges xiv. 14-18, xv. 16.

SECOND PERIOD—CREATIVE AGE OF POETIC COMPOSITION AND
 PROPHEPIC NARRATION

B. C.

- 1050 to 750. ¹State Annals and Temple Records.
- 1000 to 850. ¹Original Saul and David Stories in I Sam. ix. to I Kings ii.
¹Original Hero Stories in Judges.
¹Cycles of Stories, Preserved by the Prophetic Guilds.
¹Cycles of Primitive Stories, Preserved at Local Sanctuaries.
- 850 to 800. ¹Early Judean Prophetic Narratives in Gen. to I Kings.

¹ Known only through quotations.

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- 800 to 750. ¹Early Ephraimite Prophetic Narratives in Gen. to II Kings.
 Moab Prophecies in Isaiah xv. and xvi.
- 1000 *Judicial Decisions, e. g.* David's Law regarding the Spoil in I Sam. xxx. 24 and 25.
- 1000 to 950. ¹Primitive Decalogues, *e. g.* in Ex. xxxiv. 14 to 26.
- 900 to 750. ¹Primitive Codes in Ex. xiii., xx. 28, xxiii. 19, xxxiv. 14 to 26.
Popular Proverbs, e. g. I Sam. x. 11 and 12, xxiv. 18.
 David's Elegy on Saul and Jonathan in II Sam. i. 17 to 27, and on Abner in II Sam. iii. 33 and 34.
- 1000 to 950. Blessings of Jacob in Gen. xlix. 1 to 27.
 Original Balaam Oracles in Num. xxiii. and xxiv.
- 950 Solomon's Hymn of Dedication in I Kings viii. 12 and 18.
- 950 to 800. ¹Book of Jasher (The Righteous One), *cf.* Josh. x. 13, II Sam. i. 17, I Kings viii. 12.
¹Book of the Wars of Jehovah, *cf.* Num. xxi. 14.

THIRD PERIOD—CLASSICAL AGE OF PROPHETIC, PRIESTLY, AND WISDOM LITERATURE

B. C.

- 750 to 740. Amos. Hosea i. 3.
- 740 to 735. Hosea iv.-xiv.
- 750 to 650. ¹Later Judean Prophetic Narratives in Gen. to I Kings.
 739 to 722. Isaiah i. 1 to x. 4, xvii. 1-11, xxiii. Micah i-iii.
 715 to 700. Isaiah x. 5 to xii. 6, xiv. 24-27, xvii. 12 to xx. 6, xxii. 1-25, xxviii to xxxiii., xxxvi., xxxvii.
- 705 to 640. Micah iv. to vii. 6.
- 700 to 640. ¹Later Ephraimite Prophetic Narratives.
- 650 to 625. ¹*Blending of the Judean and Ephraimite Prophetic Narratives.* Nahum.
- 630 to 625. Zephaniah. Jeremiah i.-vi., xi. 1-8.
- 609 to 597. Jeremiah vii. 1-xii. 6, xiii. 1-14, xiv.-xx., xxv., xxvi. 7-24, xxxv., xxxvi., xlv., xlix.

¹ Known only through quotations.

- 605 to 604. Habakkuk. First and Second Editions of Jeremiah's Sermons.
- 597 to 586. Jeremiah xii. 7-17, xiii. 15-27, xxi. 1-10, xxiii., xxiv., xxvii.-xxxiv., xxxvii.-xxxix. Ezekiel i.-xxiv.
- 660 to 621. Deuteronomic Codes in Deut. v-xxvi., xxviii.
621 Public Ratification and Enforcement of the Deuteronomic Law by Josiah.
- 750 to 740. Blessing of Moses in Deut. xxxiii.
- 705 to 586. Probably Portions of the Psalms now found in the Psalter.
- 621 to 600. Original Collections of Proverbs in Prov. x. 1-xxii. 16.
Song of Thanksgiving for Past Deliverances in Ex. 15-18.
- 600 to 586. Prose Story of Job in i., ii., xlii. 7-17.

FOURTH PERIOD

B. C.

- 586 to 400. Designated by our author as the Golden Age of Composition and Compilation.
- 586 to 580. Jeremiah xl. to xliv. Ezekiel xxv. to xxxii.
- 580 to 570. Ezekiel xxxiii. to xxxix. Obadiah.
- 572 Ezekiel's Code in xl. to xlviii.
- 580 to 550. Lamentations.
- 570 to 550. Song of Moses in Deut. xxxii.
- 570 to 540. ¹ Holiness Code in Lev. xi., xvii. to xxvi.
- 580 to 540. ¹ Late Prophetic (Deut.) Narratives.
- 560 to 500. ¹ Priestly Teachings in Lev. i. to iii., v. to vii., xl. to xv., and Num. v., vi., xv., xix. 14 to 22.
- 580 to 525. Redaction of Judges, Samuel, and Kings.
- 550 to 539. Isaiah xiii. 2 to xiv. 28, xxi. 1 to 10. Jeremiah l., li.
- 550 to 520. Blending of Judean, Ephraimite and Late Prophetic Narratives.
- 545 to 539 or 450 to 400. Isaiah xl. to lv.
- 520 to 518. Haggai. Zechariah i. to viii.

¹ Known only by quotations.

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- 500 to 400. ¹ Priestly Codes. Ruth.
450 to 400. ¹ Late Priestly Narratives. *Aramaic documents*
Ezra iv. to vi.
450 to 445. Malachi.
445 to 400. Isaiah xxxiv., xxxv., lvi. to lxvi.
520 to 400. Individual Psalms.
445 to 400. Memoirs of Nehemiah in i. to vii. 5, and xliii.
400 to 398. Public Acceptance of the Priestly Law.

FIFTH PERIOD

- B. C.
400 to 1. Retrospective Age of Imitation and Canonization
400 to 350. Blending of Prophetic and Priestly Narrative
the Hexateuch.
400 to 350. First Collection of Psalms iii. to xlii.
400 to 300. Canon of the Law.
380 to 350. Joel.
350 to 330. Job i. to xxxi., xxxviii. to xlii.
340 to 333. Isaiah xxiv. to xxvii.
330 to 240. Jonah. Zechariah ix. to xiv.
300 to 250. Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah.
300 to 200. Canon of the Prophetic Writings.
250 to 100. Greek Translation of the Old Testament.
225 to 200. Book of Proverbs. Song of Songs.
225 to 170. Ecclesiastes.
200 to 120. Esther.
190. Ben Sira.
168 to 165. Daniel. Enoch i. to xxxvi., lxxxiii. to xc.
160 to 140. ¹ Books of Jason on the Maccabean Wars.
142 to 140. Completion of the Psalter.
135 to 125. I Maccabees.
135 to 25. Tobit. Judith.
100 to 50. Wisdom of Solomon.
60 to 10. II Maccabees.
A. D. 100. Completion of Old Testament Canon.

¹ Known only through quotations.

The Tel El Amarna letters furnish us with indisputable evidence that, prior to the conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews, that land was the home of people who possessed a literature; that the art of writing was, with a certain class at least, a common acquirement. It therefore makes the barbaric influence of the conquerors appear in a stronger light if we are obliged to concede that written documents among the Hebrews were practically unknown until after the establishment of the Davidic kingdom.

This certainly seems to be the conclusion of the author whose tables we have just made use of. In his second period literature appears to have been quite abundant, none of which, however, is known to us except through quotations, save David's Elegies on Saul, Jonathan, and Abner; Blessings of Jacob; Balaam Oracles; and Solomon's Hymn of Dedication.

The conclusion forced upon us by the evidence considered is, that prior to the age of the first tier of prophets, that is, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah, Israel had a literature, — a sort of historical melange. But except the names of some of the works, a few

allusions to it, and a few quotations from it, this literature totally disappeared during the captivity. This disappearance was unquestionably due to the fact that the promoters of Judaism felt that it was not of a character that would help their theory of what the history of Israel ought to be, in order to give the necessary groundwork for their scheme. What was necessary they had no hesitation in supplying, working in, of course, such of the old as would not prejudice their plan. From the age of Josiah to that of Christ the genius of Israel was employed in developing Judaism and its literature. The influence that this development has had upon the world we will now try to consider.

Every nation has its ideals, which are the most important factors in determining the character of the people. Greek ideals were embodied in the beautiful in art and literature, and gave a distinctive tone to Greek character everywhere. Roman ideals were expressed in the majesty and dignity of law and order, and a Roman of the old stamp was a living presentment of that idea. In our own age and country, Washington stands as an ideal of probity and honor; Franklin, of

sagacity and wisdom; Jefferson, of sturdy democracy; and in proportion as we emulate the virtues of these men we become imbued with these qualities. The attainment is never higher than the standards we set, always lower. When we look for the Jewish ideals of life and conduct, we find them expressed in the lives of Jacob and David. Moses stands first in their reverential regard, but he stands as the divine instrument by which the law was introduced. His personality, aside from this divine character, scarcely appears. It does not matter what the real facts regarding Jacob and David were, or whether these men ever lived or not, — it is what the author would have us believe concerning them that furnishes us with what were his, and his people's, ideals of the highest type of manhood in the age in which he wrote.

Gauged by modern standards the morality of these two men was extremely low. Our author seems to think that the base and unscrupulous means by which Jacob succeeded in filching from his careless and big-hearted brother the birthright and patriarchal possessions most commendable and praiseworthy

acts. The diamond-cut-diamond tactics between Laban and his son-in-law furnishes scope for more commendation for superior shrewdness and artful deception practised, while the cringing attitude of Jacob when forced to meet this brother whom he had so deeply wronged, and whose righteous indignation he had just cause to fear, awakens a feeling of contempt. There is not a suggestion of shame or remorse, no indication of moral tone, that might have mitigated to some extent the conscienceless nature of his conduct; but his only thought is how best, by tact and artful dodging, to still overreach and at the same time mollify his brother, toward whom he does not appear to entertain the slightest sentiment of brotherly affection. What a contrast with the noble and magnanimous conduct of Esau. Yet our author would strip from Esau all credit for the open-hearted, ingenuous way in which he met and showered evidences of kindly regard and brotherly love upon Jacob. He would have us believe that Esau's noble and unselfish conduct was impelled by God, who thus interposed in his favorite's behalf. Esau has had to stand in line with the Bible miscreants, but

to my mind he is the noblest character in Hebrew Scriptures.

What strikes us in this delineation of Jacob's character is the total want of moral sense. Unscrupulous scheming is the keynote, and in all the ages of Judaism this ideal has never failed to inspire the sectaries of that faith with keenest emulation.

The history of David comes to us only from his friends. His enemies are also the enemies of his biographers. In their anxiety to present him as the model of piety, the favorite of Jehovah, the staunch and unbending upholder of priestly institutions, deeply imbued with the spirit of Judaism, they lose sight of the compromising character they often give him in matters of moral import. The lovely character in which the youthful harpist is portrayed, his forgiving disposition, and his horror of doing violence to the Lord's anointed, ill accord with the savage and sanguinary disposition manifested in scores of instances. The extermination of the communities of Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites, in which David left neither man nor woman alive, and the deception he practised on the Philistine king (1 Sam.

xxvii.), Bible authorities would have us believe were stamped with God's approval. There is no room for doubt, and the Bible narrative evidently does not intend there shall be, that Nabal's death was deliberate murder, — just as much so as Uriah's. There is no attempt to disguise the bloody reprisals and the cruel tortures to which he subjected those whom he overcame in war. (1 Chron., 20th chapter.) No better index of his character can be found than in the utter disregard of his most solemn oaths, made to both Saul (1 Sam. xxiv. 21-22) and to Jonathan (1 Sam. xx. 13-17), that when he became king he would not cut off the house of Saul; yet thirty-five years after the death of that monarch, upon the hatched-up pretence of God's anger against him, because he had slain some of the Gibeonites (Hivites), David executes seven of the sons of Saul, brothers of Jonathan, — his dearest friend. There was no pretence that these men were inciting rebellion or causing trouble of any kind, and it is unbelievable that had they been concerned in anything of the kind the fact would not have been mentioned. In line with what we might expect from this Jewish ideal is the diabolical

character of David's last commands to Solomon regarding Joab, who, whatever may have been his deserts, was the man to whom David owed more than any other for his success in life. Through his zealous efforts his royal master was often relieved of troublesome enemies, and he always proved a faithful, efficient, and unscrupulous servant, and an able leader of the armies of Israel. We cannot read the Scripture story of David without feeling that his personal interests were paramount on all occasions. His patriotism did not prevent him from entering the service of his country's bitterest foe, and thus becoming her enemy. The picture presented of his family life, and the conduct of his children, portrays murder, incest, adultery, and unbridled license. Solomon, his son and successor, a perfect model of piety and holy zeal, begins his reign by carrying out the sanguinary commands of his father, and adds thereto the murder of his brother, whose right to the throne he had usurped.

There is a large amount of misleading data connected with the traditional history of David. The priestly poets of Israel, many of whom possessed the faculty of expressing

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in poetic imagery feelings and impulses born of a religious life and training, were ever ascribing to David the product of their genius. This may have seemed to them a necessity in order to give currency, prestige, and authority to their efforts. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that a single sentence of the Psalter can properly be ascribed to Israel's warrior king. The adoration, penitence, trust, and pardoning grace of God, often expressed in this collection, belong to the period of the captivity and after, and in so far as they have been taken as indices of the real David's religious character are practically worthless. Still, David — the ideal — has always been looked upon as the "Sweet Singer of Israel;" and the pious sentiments ascribed to him might have modified, to some extent, the harshness of this idealistic picture had not the imprecatory Psalms revealed the true animus of these ideal-makers. They were filled with the bitterest hate, and manifested the most intolerant spirit toward all mankind outside the Jewish race.

The universal dislike, in every quarter of the globe, in every age since Judaism has ex-

isted, that has been manifested toward the Jewish people, is easily traced to racial characteristics possessed by that singular nation. It would be useless to deny that they have evinced a marked aptitude for religion. This faculty, undoubtedly due to the excision of political activity and the constructive genius of Ezekiel and his school, intensified the belief that God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, was their God only. The celebrated apothegm, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," led to the logical conclusion that to them, as the children and heirs of the Lord, the earth and its fulness belonged. It was their patrimony, and no consciousness of wrong-doing intruded when appropriating anything or everything their heathen neighbors might possess that came within their reach. No scruples taught by their religion interposed, and time has fully confirmed habits this doctrine inculcated. This pernicious and immoral principle, drawn directly from Judaism, as almost every page of the Old Testament confirms, and applied in both Christian and Moslem religions, has been the excuse for almost every species of injustice and cruelty that has cursed the world. The

Christian nations of the middle ages, and the various Christian sects, until recent times, have acted upon this principle in their dealings with the inferior races; yet they have strongly resented every attempt of the wily Israelite to practise the doctrine upon themselves.

At the time when Judaism became a factor in the religions of mankind, the fairest portion of the known world was cemented in that vast conglomerate of nations known as the Roman Empire, — an empire extending more than two thousand miles from north to south, and three thousand from east to west, containing a population estimated at one hundred and twenty million. We quote from Gibbon (“Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire”), who in matters pertaining to the social, political, civil, and military conditions of the ancient world is regarded as authority; we believe him to be equally well versed in matters of religion, despite the hue and cry that has been raised against him on account of his infidel proclivities.

Speaking of ancient Rome, he says: “The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valor. The gentle but powerful influence of

laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence: the Roman Senate appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and devolved on the emperors all the executive powers of government. The firm edifice of Roman power had been raised by the wisdom of ages, and the obedient provinces of Trajan and the Antonines were united by laws and adorned by arts. They might occasionally suffer from the partial abuse of delegated authority; but the general principle of government was wise, simple, and beneficent."

In spite of the black and damning character which the bigotry and intolerance of later time has sought to fasten upon the first ages of the empire, the fact stands out plain and strong that in no age of the world's history prior to the present has intelligence been so generally diffused and the material well-being of mankind so universally regarded as during the first two centuries of the Christian era. Again quoting from Gibbon: "Notwithstanding the propensity of man-

kind to exalt the past and depreciate the present, the tranquil and prosperous state of the empire was warmly felt and honestly confessed by provincials as well as Romans. . . . They acknowledged that the true principles of social life, laws, agriculture, and science, which had been first invented by the wisdom of Athens, were now firmly established by the power of Rome, under whose auspicious influence the fiercest barbarians were united by an equal government and common language. They affirm that with the improvements of the arts the human species had visibly multiplied. They celebrate the increasing splendor of the cities and the beautiful face of the country, cultivated and adorned like an immense garden; and the long festival of peace, which was enjoyed by so many nations, forgetful of their ancient animosities and delivered from the apprehension of future danger. . . . Whatever suspicion may be suggested by the air of rhetoric and declamation, which seems to prevail in these passages, the substance of them is perfectly agreeable to historic truth."

In his delineation of the "Union and Internal Prosperity of the Roman Empire in

the Age of the Antonines," speaking of the religious aspect of the world, he makes use of the following language:

"The policy of the emperors and the Senate, as far as it concerned religion, was happily seconded by the reflections of the enlightened, and by the habits of the superstitious, part of their subjects. The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord."

"The superstition of the people was not embittered by any mixture of theological rancor; nor was it confined by the chains of any speculative system. The devout polytheist, though fondly attached to his national rites, admitted with implicit faith the different religions of the earth. Fear, gratitude, and curiosity, a dream or an omen, a singular disorder, or a distant journey, perpetually disposed him to multiply the articles of his belief and enlarge the list of his protectors. The thin texture of pagan mythology was

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interwoven with various but not discordant materials. . . . The deities of a thousand groves and a thousand streams possessed in peace their local and respective influence; nor could the Roman who deprecated the wrath of the Tiber deride the Egyptian who presented his offering to the beneficent genius of the Nile. The visible powers of nature, the planets, and the elements were the same throughout the universe. The invisible governors of the moral world were inevitably cast in a similar mould of fiction and allegory. Every virtue, and even vice, acquired its divine representative; every art and profession its patron, whose attributes, in the most distant ages and countries, were uniformly derived from the character of their peculiar votaries. A republic of gods of such opposite tempers and interests required in every system the moderating hand of a supreme magistrate, who, by the progress of knowledge and flattery, was gradually invested with the sublime perfections of an Eternal Parent and an Omnipotent Monarch. Such was the mild spirit of antiquity, and the nations were less attentive to the difference than to the resemblance of their religious worship. The

Greek, the Roman, and the barbarian, as they met before their respective altars, easily persuaded themselves that, under various names and with various ceremonies, they adored the same deities."

To this picture of universal tolerance (to which a multitude of Christian writers raised a clamorous protest that time has effectually stilled) the same author in equally forcible and truthful language presents the single exception as follows:

"A single people refused to join in the common intercourse of mankind. The Jews, who, under the Assyrian and Persian monarchies, had languished for many ages the most despised portion of their slaves, emerged from obscurity under the successors of Alexander; and as they multiplied to a surprising degree in the East, and afterward in the West, they soon excited the curiosity of other nations. The sullen obstinacy with which they maintained their peculiar rites and unsocial manners seemed to mark them out as a distinct species of men, who boldly professed, or who faintly disguised, their implacable hatred to the rest of the human kind. Neither the violence of Antiochus, nor the arts of

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Herod, nor the example of the circumjacent nations could ever persuade the Jews to associate with the institutions of Moses the elegant mythology of the Greeks. According to the maxims of universal toleration, the Romans protected a superstition which they despised. The polite Augustus condescended to give orders that sacrifices should be offered for his prosperity in the temple of Jerusalem; while the meanest of the posterity of Abraham, who should have paid the same homage to the Jupiter of the Capitol, would have been an object of abhorrence to himself and to his brethren. But the moderation of the conquerors was insufficient to appease the jealous prejudices of their subjects, who were alarmed and scandalized at the ensigns of paganism, which necessarily introduced themselves into a Roman province. The mad attempt of Caligula to place his own statue in the temple of Jerusalem was defeated by the unanimous resolution of the people, who dreaded death much less than such an idolatrous profanation. Their attachment to the law of Moses was equal to their detestation of foreign religions. The current of zeal and devotion, as it was contracted into a narrow channel, ran

with the strength and sometimes with the fury of a torrent."

The Jews were fully possessed with the idea that they alone were the heirs of the covenant, and the deference that has been paid to this doctrine by the Christian and Moslem religions has confirmed this conceit, and established an indubitable claim to their lofty pretensions. Under these circumstances it is not strange that they should have rendered themselves obnoxious to the rest of the world. The two religions mentioned have asserted that later revelation has endowed them with superior rights under new covenants, but neither questions the validity of the old. We may look then for the causes of the universal hatred by mankind of the Jewish race in the fundamental principles and teachings of Judaism. Its ideals for both human and divine character are of the lowest type. Its spirit is the spirit of exclusiveness, bigotry, intolerance, and persecution. For fifteen centuries it held the greater part of what had constituted the Roman Empire in its merciless grasp. As it became the ruling factor in the life of the people, it remoulded and largely destroyed their social, political, and

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religious habits and institutions, — the growth and fruitage of centuries of healthy, and, in the main, wise development. It destroyed the ancient conceptions of deity; conceptions that recognized in the forces resident in matter evidence of divine immanence, — that identified God with the universe itself, and substituted an unnatural, unintelligible being, who, standing entirely outside of all material things, manipulated them in an unnatural, unintelligible way. Coincident with the rise and predominance of this spirit was the decline and fall of the human intellect. A mental paralysis followed in its wake. We have only to compare the works of the Greeks and Romans in literature and art, beginning with Homer and Hesiod and ending with the Antonines, with the inane platitudes of the Talmud, and the works of Christian historians and apologists, upon whom this spirit most liberally descended, to understand the appalling change that had been wrought. Across the path of human progress it erected a wall of prejudice and rancor that has served as breastworks, behind which the theological dogmatism of the past eighteen hundred years has entrenched itself, and from which van-

tage-ground it has opposed every movement looking toward the intellectual, moral, and material advancement of the human species. The pernicious doctrine that there is a God, who has his favorites, in either an ethnic or sectarian sense, has wrought incalculable mischief to earth's inhabitants; it is a doctrine that is gradually retiring to that limbo from whence it never ought to have emerged.



APPENDIX

CODE OF HAMMURABI, KING OF BABYLON

B. C. 2285-42

THIS code opens with laws recognizing and regulating sympathetic magic, Sections 1 and 2 being devoted to that subject. "If a man weave a spell and put a ban upon a man, and has not justified himself, he that wove the spell upon him shall be put to death." In the second section trial by ordeal is provided: the accused is required to plunge into the holy river; if guilty he is overcome, if innocent he escapes unhurt. In the first case his property goes to the accuser; in the second the accuser is put to death and the accused receives his property.

It is easy to see that a law of this kind would most effectually prevent accusations, for the uncertainty of being able to furnish proof on charges of this character would be apparent to any one.

Sections 3 and 4. Capital punishment inflicted for uttering threats against witnesses or for perjury. Penalty for bribing witnesses, the sentence of the case.

Section 5. Judge, for altering judgment, fined twelve times the penalty of the judgment and expulsion from the judge's seat.

Sections 6 to 18. Theft from temple or palace, or receiving property stolen from these places, punishable by death. Property lost must be identified, and the finder must satisfactorily explain how it came in his possession; unless the owner can prove his property, after being allowed six months to produce witnesses, he is put to death. Kidnaping punishable by death. Fugitive servants harbored a capital crime; on the other hand, all such returned to their masters to be paid two shekels of silver.

Section 21. For housebreaking, penalty, death.

Section 22 to 25. Brigandage punished by death. Loss from this cause made good by city or district in which it occurred, and in case of life lost, relatives receive one mina of silver.

Section 25. Life the forfeit of him who,

in helping extinguish the fire that is consuming his neighbor's house, takes anything therefrom for himself.

Sections 26 to 42. These are taken up with laws relating to land, houses, gardens, and stock assigned by the king to his gangers, constables, or other officers; this property is inalienable, sale or purchase of same is forbidden, must not be exchanged, nor devised to females. Under certain circumstances may be deputed; is forfeited by disuse. These officials must on pain of death perform the duties assigned them; to delegate another to do the king's business is a most grievous offence, punishable by death.

Sections 42 to 65. Fines were imposed for not carrying out terms of lease, but for loss of crops occasioned by storms, fire, or flood, owner and cultivator must share loss according to terms of contract. If through negligence a man allows the banks of his canal to break and damage the land or crops of others, he must pay for the damage done. If unable to do this, the people of the district must share the loss. A shepherd who allows his flock to feed on the field of another must make good the damage. Fine for cutting a

tree in another's orchard, one-half mina of silver.

Sections 65 to 100. These thirty-five sections erased probably by an Elamite king who had carried off the stone from a temple at Sippara in Babylonia.

Sections 100 to 108. Prescribes relations between merchant and his agent. Goods must be invoiced with prices, and agent held responsible for them. If, however, there is a loss from brigandage or unavoidable cause, which the factor can show was beyond his power to prevent, then he is relieved from loss.

Sections 108 to 112. Are laws regulating the business of wine merchants. These appear to have been women altogether, for men are not mentioned in connection with the business. These merchants must not sell drink cheaper than corn, except in harvest time, under penalty of being thrown into the water. They must not suffer brawling or seditious talk in or about their shops, and must hale offending parties to the palace, *i. e.* judgment. No votary or vowed woman must engage in wine-selling, nor enter a wine-shop, on pain of death.

Sections 112 to 114. Goods confided to the care of another must be fully accounted for under penalty of fivefold the value of such goods.

Sections 114 to 120. Distrain for debt, if not justified, punishable by fine of one-third mina of silver for each offence. Man seized for debt may give his son, his wife, or daughter to work off the debt, but the time for such service was limited to three years; in the fourth year they go free; if they should die a natural death within this time, the creditor goes free; but if death is caused from abuse, if it be the debtor's son, then the son of the creditor must die. (This seems a harsh and unjust law, but when we consider the security it must have guaranteed to the poor, who would have otherwise been at the mercy of their masters, we may conclude it was a most effective law for developing sentiments of humanity.)

If a man gives his man servant or his maid servant to work off the debt, and the creditor shall sell them for money, no one can object, except in case of a maid servant who has borne her master children; then the master must ransom her.

Sections 120 to 122. Laws relating to the storage of grain, also price for such storage.

Sections 122 to 125. Witnesses and bonds required in every transaction in which property in trust is involved.

Sections 125 and 126 relate to disputes regarding losses in which the parties are required to recount before God their losses, that is, they are put under oath.

Sections 127 to 133. A slanderer unable to prove accusation to be branded upon the forehead. Adultery punished by both parties being drowned. Rape punished by death of ravisher.

Sections 133 to 135. The wife who deserts the home of her husband, that has been taken captive, for another, if her husband had left her the means of maintenance, punished by drowning. In case she is left without maintenance, if she goes to the home of another she has no blame. If, however, the captive returns, the wife must return to him. Children by the man with whom she has lived go with their father.

Section 136. If a man deserts his wife and she marries a second husband, she must not return to the first.

Sections 137 to 141. A man who would put away his wife or concubine who has borne him children, shall return the marriage portion and in addition shall give her the usufruct of field, garden, and other property, and she shall bring the children up; when they are grown, whatever they receive from their father's estate, a share equal to that of one child shall be given her and she may marry the husband of her choice. In case there were no children, he shall give her her dowry and the marriage portion that she brought from her father's house. If there was no dowry, he shall give her one mina of silver for a divorce; if too poor to give so much, he shall give one-third of a mina of silver.

Section 141. If a woman has wasted her house, belittled her husband, is a gossip and a gadabout, upon evidence properly presented, the husband may put her away without giving her anything for a divorce; but if he does not put her away, but marries another woman, the first shall dwell in the house as a maid servant.

Sections 142 and 143. The woman who desires to separate from her husband may, if inquiry into her past shows that she has been

economical and has no vice, and that her husband has gone out and greatly belittled her, take her marriage portion and go off to her father's house. If the blame is on her, she shall be thrown into the waters.

Sections 144 to 147. If a man has espoused a votary, and that votary has given a maid to her husband and has brought up children, ✓ he cannot take a concubine; provided the wife does not do this, he may take a concubine, but she must not be put on an equality with the wife. The maid that has borne children cannot be sold; the one that has not, her mistress may sell.

Sections 148 and 149. If a man has married a wife and a sickness has seized her, and he wishes to marry a second, he may do so, but he cannot put away the first. He must maintain her as long as she lives, or she may take her marriage portion and return to her father's house.

Section 150. A man may deed property to his wife, and after his death children must not dispute her title. She may dispose of it as she sees fit.

Sections 151 and 152. Woman must not be seized for debt of her husband contracted

before marriage, nor man for woman's antenuptial debts, but both are liable for seizure for debts contracted after marriage.

Section 153. A woman causing the death of her husband on account of another man shall be impaled.

Sections 154 to 159. Laws defining incest and penalties prescribed, in most cases death.

Sections 159 to 165. Relates to dowries and marriage portions; the former seem to have been paid by the bridegroom to the bride's father, but for the use and benefit of the wife; the latter was paid by the bride's father to the bridegroom, who might enjoy the usufruct, but both dowry and marriage portion remained the absolute property of the wife. This property, on death of the wife, if there were children, became the children's property; if the wife died childless, the dowry was returned to the husband, the marriage portion to the father.

Sections 165 to 175. Relate to distribution of property by deed, will, or in absence of either. What a man may give to a favorite child during life does not affect the child's share in the division of his father's property after death. If a man marries a second wife,

sons of the second marriage that are unmarried must have set aside money as dowries. Children of two mothers share the marriage portions of their respective mothers, and the property of the father is divided equally between the children of both marriages. A man is forbidden to cut off a son unless that son has committed a heavy crime against the father, and then only on a second offence. The children of a man's maid servant, which he acknowledges as his own, share equally with the children of the wife; if he does not acknowledge them, they and their mother go free,— they do not remain servants of the wife and her sons. The wife takes her marriage portion and the settlement her husband has made, and may dwell in the dwelling of her husband as long as she lives. This property, however, at her death becomes the property of her children. If she wishes to marry again, she may take her marriage portion, but shall not take her husband's settlement. If she has children by this later marriage, upon her death they share equally with children by former marriage of her marriage portion.

Sections 175 and 176. Children of a slave and a free woman are free. Any property

acquired, on death of the slave to be equally divided, one-half going to the master, and one-half to the mother and her children.

Section 177. A widow with young children must not marry without consent of judge. When such consent is given, the pair must bind themselves to provide for and rear the little ones, but they are forbidden to dispose of any of the first husband's property, the buyer of which forfeits his money and must return the property to its owners.

Sections 178 to 183. Relate to lady, votary, or vowed woman whose father has granted her a marriage portion. It would seem by the way the deed was worded, that is, if he has not written "After her wherever is good to her to give," that is, has not permitted her all her choice, her brothers shall take her field, garden, and what pertains thereto, and according to the value of her share shall pay her in corn, oil, and wool enough to satisfy her, or she can let the property to a cultivator and sustain herself from the proceeds. At her death, however, it reverts to her brothers. If her father has written as above, has allowed her all her choice, then it is hers to dispose of as she sees fit, and her brothers have noth-

ing whatever to do with it. In case the father dies without this deed or a will, she shares equally with the sons.

Section 181. We must infer from this section that parents could and frequently did ✓ dedicate their daughters to the service of God. Of these votaries there were several classes; they usually lived in convents, some were undoubtedly celibates, others were permitted to marry, while some — those attached to the cult of Ishtar — were hierodules.

Daughters thus dedicated, if not granted marriage portion, were entitled to one-third sonship's share and were exempted from taxation. If a votary of Marduk of Babylon, this share became hers absolutely; otherwise her portion, upon her death, went to her brothers.

Sections 183 and 184. If a father has granted to his daughter, who is a concubine, a marriage portion, at his death she does not share in his property; otherwise she does.

Sections 185 to 192. Laws governing the adoption of children. A man that has reared a child has undisputed claim to him. The son of a palace official or of a vowed woman, no one has any claim upon. A boy to whom

an artisan has taught his handicraft no one has claim upon. If a child is not brought up as a son, he still belongs to his natural parents. An adopted son cannot be dismissed except when he receives one-third of his sonship, that is, one-third of what he would receive were he a natural son. (The word "son" was the legal designation of child, and applied to daughters as well.)

Sections 192 to 194. Son of a palace official or vowed woman, who denies father or mother, shall have his tongue cut out. If he hates his father or mother and runs away, he shall lose an eye.

Section 194. If a child given to a wet-nurse should die, and the nurse should procure another without the consent of the parents of the dead child, then the nurse shall have her breasts cut off.

Sections 195 to 209. Laws regarding penalties and fines for personal injuries inflicted purposely or by accident. In the first case *lex talionis* is enforced if the parties belong to the same social grade; in the last, mitigating circumstances modify the penalties. In no case, however, is the principle or practice of blood-revenge allowed, the execution of the

various penalties being the duty of the officials legally appointed for the city or district in which the crime was committed. In these laws discrimination is made in the severity of personal penalties, the poor man being mutilated in some instances where the higher classes could escape with a fine; but on the other hand, where fines were imposed, the higher classes were mulcted very much more than the lower.

Sections 209 to 214 refer to injuries causing miscarriage, in which the social distinction noted above prevails. The poor, while protected from their own class and those above them, are yet discriminated against in being liable for personal mutilations from which the upper classes could escape by fines.

Sections 216 to 226. Laws relating to doctors, in which want of skill or attention that causes death or permanent injury to a patient, if he be a gentleman, entails the loss of the doctor's hand, — lesser penalties for the lower classes. On the other hand, the doctor's fees were proportioned to the ability of the patient to pay.

Sections 226 to 228. Branding slaves, if done without consent of owner, punishable

by loss of hand of brander. If deceived, the brander went free and the penalty was imposed upon the one at fault.

Sections 228 to 234. The builder of a house to receive a certain sum (two shekels of silver per sar of house). If the structure falls and kills the owner, the builder shall be put to death; if son of the owner is killed, the son of the builder must suffer the penalty, and so on, wife for wife, daughter for daughter. The loss of a slave must be made good by another slave, goods destroyed must be replaced, and the builder must properly rebuild the house.

Sections 234 to 241. Laws regulating ships, in which price for navigating is named. Loss occasioned by carelessness of navigator must be made good by him. Wages of boatmen fixed.

Sections 241 to 252 specifies what shall be paid for hired oxen, cows, sheep, etc., and the liabilities of the man who hires, and the owner in case of accident or carelessness, whereby the animals are either killed or injured. If killed by lightning, wild animals, or other unavoidable accident, the loss is the owner's;

otherwise must be paid for by the man who hires.

Sections 253 to 256 require that a man hiring land and stock shall keep and resign same at the end of the term for which it was hired in as good condition as when received.

Sections 257 to 260 state wages to be paid harvesters and ox-drivers; also fixes fines for stealing farming utensils.

Sections 261 to 268. Laws relating to herdsmen, fixing their wages per annum. Herdsman must account for all committed to his care.

Sections 268 to 275. Specify what shall be the pay per diem for the different classes of artisans and laborers.

Sections 275 to 278. Fixes price of hire of boats and ships.

Section 278 provides that if servants purchased fall sick within a month from date of said purchase, the seller must refund the money and take the slaves back, — they must be as represented.

Section 279. “If a man has bought a man servant or a maid servant and has a complaint, his seller shall answer the complaint.”

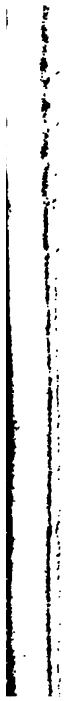
Section 280. "If a man has bought in a foreign land the man servant or the maid servant of a man when he came into the land, and the owner of the man servant or maid servant has recognized his man servant or maid servant, if the man servant or maid servant are natives without price, he shall grant them their freedom."

Section 281. If they are natives of another land, the buyer shall tell out before God the money he paid, and the owner of the man servant or maid servant shall give to the merchant the money he paid, and shall recover his man servant or maid servant.

Section 282. "If a slave has said to his master, 'Thou art not my master,' as his slave one shall put him to account and his master shall cut off his ear."

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