

consonant with the wisdom of the Almighty Author of the Universe, that he should have pursued a similar order in the creation of man, than that he should have left the great work of distribution to chance and the caprice of savages ?

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XXIII. — *The Ethnology of Egypt.* By REGINALD STUART POOLE, Esq.

THE ethnology of Egypt deserves a careful study, mainly on two grounds. Its data extend through a longer period than those of the ethnology of any other country ; and the Egyptian race has throughout this period occupied an intermediate place in type as in position between the Arabs and the Negroes. The point to which I wish this evening to draw attention, is the manner in which these data illustrate the great question of permanence of type, the importance of which I need not urge upon the Society. I wish to show what was the ethnology of Egypt three thousand years ago, on the evidence of its monuments ; what it is now, as I have seen it, in common with not a few here present ; and to point out how a comparison of the two sets of data illustrates the question of the permanence of type.

I may observe, that the evidence of the Egyptian monuments is perfectly clear and satisfactory ; that the dates to which they are assigned are in accordance with the general consent of Egyptologists ; and that the system of interpretation upon which not only these dates, but the facts derived from the monuments, depend, though lately rudely assailed, rest upon clear and satisfactory proof. When I speak of the representation of the Philistines upon the Egyptian monuments of about B.C. 1200, I am speaking of what is as well ascertained as any point in ancient history. Slight, and even great, differences there are among Egyptologists ; but I can confine myself in the present case to matters upon which there is a general and very near agreement.

The Egyptian race, as represented upon their monuments, ranging from full B.C. 2400 to A.D. 200, have the same type. The colour is brown, varying from light to dark, the characteristics intermediate between the Caucasian and the Nigritian type ; the eyes being almond-shaped, the nose thick though straight, and even sometimes with a bridge, the lips full, and the hair long but crisp. The type is nearly that of the peasants of Upper Egypt, and the Copts, as well as the so-called Arabs of the eastern desert of Egypt and Nubia, the Ababdeh, and the Bishárees. The Egyptian peasants show a nearer approach to the Arab type from the constant influx of Arab immigrants, especially since the Muslim

conquest. The evidence as to other races I take from monuments ranging in date from about B.C. 1400 to about B.C. 1200, or roughly, of three thousand years ago.

The inhabitants of Syria and the neighbouring countries, as well as the Libyans, are generally represented as fair, with full red beards, hooked noses, and blue eyes.

The nations of Central Africa have the pure Negro type.

There are some other types, which are not so readily to be distinguished. In Syria we find traces of a nation with a Mongolian type, which seems to have been mixed with a Shemite population, and in one case is taken as the type of the Shemites, in an ethnological representation to be afterwards noticed.

The Philistines, and some other nations of the Mediterranean coast and islands, have a type intermediate between the Egyptian and the Syrian, in accordance with the mention in the Bible that the Philistines were of Mizraite origin.

We have, therefore, two great distinct types, the Arab on the east and west of Egypt, and the Negro on the south; and the Egyptian type occupying a middle place between the two. The representations of the monuments, although conventional, are so extremely characteristic, that it is quite impossible to mistake them.

A visit to Egypt in the present day, shows that the same types predominate still in that country and the neighbouring lands. The Arab type is still that of the nations to the east of Egypt, and those to the west on the Mediterranean coast. In Central Africa the pure Negro is still found. The Egyptian type, though nearer to the Arab than of old, is still almost essentially unchanged; and absolutely the same type is found in individuals in Egypt, and throughout some neighbouring Ethiopian races. In the markets of Cairo you may see all these types, and several others, among which the Tatar is the most remarkable; but the majority of the passengers are of the three types mainly represented on the monuments of three thousand years ago. The Eastern Jews most nearly correspond to the ancient representation of the Arab type, and usually have blue eyes and red or light hair.

We find, therefore, that an interval of three thousand years does not indicate the least change in the Negro or the Arab; and that even the type which seems to be intermediate between them is virtually as unaltered. Those who consider that length of time can change a type of man, will do well to consider the fact that three thousand years gives no ratio on which a calculation could be founded.

It may be asked whether the Egyptian records throw any further light upon this question. I would first briefly mention the Egyptian notion of ethnology, which, however slight in scien-

tific value, has at least some interest as depending upon a very early ethnological document. In the paintings of the Tombs of the Kings, dating about B.C. 1300 and 1200, one subject, which occurs several times, is the representation of the four races of man. These are the Egyptians, called Men; the Aämu or Asiatics, generally of the Arab type, but once of the Tatar; the Nahsee or Negroes; and the Temhu or Libyans, also of the Arab type. If we leave out the Egyptians, as of a type intermediate between the Arab and the Negro, and consider the separation of Eastern and Western Arabs to be geographical rather than ethnological, we have again two principal types; if we admit that the Egyptians were really acquainted with a Tatar race, we have a third principal type; but we find nothing to shake our opinions previously formed.

A careful examination of the religion and language of the ancient Egyptians gives greater clearness to our deductions. The religion we at once perceive to be composed of two incongruous elements, which never were fused, but only mixed, like oil and water. The great and special characteristic that at first arrests the attention, is the low nature-worship that held so important a place in this religion, and for which philosophical explanations have been proposed in vain. The worship of stones, trees, and animals cannot be philosophically explained: it is not the product of a nation in an advanced intellectual condition. We find it at the present day among all the Negro peoples. Connected with this low nature-worship was a strong belief in the lowest kind of magic, in charms and incantations. The famous *Book of the Dead* is nothing but a series of magical prayers and incantations, and directions for making charms, with the object of securing for the soul future felicity. This kind of magic is equally characteristic of the Negro; and nothing can be happier, as a description of the people of a Negro town of to-day, than that which Herodotus gives of the blacks of a town of Central Africa, beyond the Great Desert, reached by the Nasamonian. All the men of that town, he says, were soothsayers. As the Negro goes on a journey hung about with charms, so the ancient Egyptian took his long journey into the unknown world, covered with amulets, and fortified by the knowledge of incantations. But how are we to account for the combination of this fetishism with the high doctrines which we know the Egyptians to have held, with a belief in the future state, in judgment to come, and in rewards and punishments according to the lives men had led on earth, or even with a reverence for supposed intelligences and the somewhat lower cosmic worship? The worship of intelligences is as incongruous with low nature-worship as the Egyptian representation of men with the heads of animals. That very mode of representation shows that the two systems were never fused.

In the language of the ancient Egyptians we discover the same elements. Essentially it is of the most primitive class, and possesses striking affinities with the Nigritian, as well as with the Tatar forms of speech. It is monosyllabic, and incapable of true inflexion or composition. Its grammatical changes are effected by means of prefixes or suffixes which are readily seen to be distinct words. But we are surprised to find that the pronouns are the same as those of the Semitic languages. Upon this identity of the pronouns an elaborate theory has been built. The late Baron Bunsen supposed that the Egyptian must be the primitive Semitic. He conjectured that the language entered Egypt, leaving its Semitic element in Asia, and that its Nigritian element passed into further Africa; the two remaining mixed in Egypt. Why only one element should have been left in Asia, and only one passed into Central Africa, whereas both remained in Egypt, he does not show. The theory is manifestly forced; but it is the only one that can explain the peculiarities of the language, if it is allowed but a single origin. But when we observe that the race partakes of the characteristics of the Negroes and the Arabs, we understand why the language is mainly Nigritian but has Arab elements. In language, as in race, there is a mixture of Negro and Arab characteristics; in both, too essential not to be of the same antiquity as the type itself. Thus, while there is reason to regard the Egyptian type as having originated from two others, the language and religion of the nation preserve the original types in distinct forms, and furnish an additional evidence of their inflexible permanence.

But, if we hold that mankind consists of even two distinct types, what becomes of the opinion that all races sprung from a single pair? Permanence of type involves at least duality of origin. Here I would guard against the idea that I set no value upon the Biblical indications of the origin of man; but I would seriously urge the importance of not prejudging this question upon evidence we may not perfectly understand. The historical evidence, in the opinion of many scholars, is equally in favour of duality as of unity of origin; and the whole weight of argument is now made to depend upon the doctrinal evidence. But it must be remembered that a great service has been done to religion by the development of the principle that there are limits to religious thought; and I venture to think that this is a case to which that principle eminently applies. At all events, no injury can arise to religion from a fearless and independent pursuit of knowledge, which will teach us sooner or later that ethnology, like astronomy and geology, has been misunderstood; and that the only harm that has been done, has occurred through the partial suppression of inquiry, not through its free prosecution.

If we consider that the case of the Egyptians affords us a fair

basis for a theory, we may further examine the ethnology, religion, and languages of other nations, in order to test its correctness. The result will, I think, be, that we shall find that a double origin is generally necessary, though in some purer races it seems scarcely traceable; and that it is probable that the two elements are always those that we find in the case of the Egyptians.

The theory which I have endeavoured to state is not my own. I take it from a work I edited, and of which I have undeservedly been credited by some with the authorship, the *Genesis of the Earth and of Man*. What I have endeavoured to do on the present occasion, is to show how inevitably the ethnology of Egypt leads me, as it led the author of that work, to the theory that the races of man spring from two different sources.

I would say a few words on the moral tendency of such a theory. It has been alleged that its adoption would inevitably weaken the feeling of brotherhood that has gradually been gaining ground in modern times. But to what do we owe that feeling? Surely to the teaching and influence of Christianity, not to any abstract historical theory. It is said that, in the Southern States of America, the idea of more origins than one prevails; as, indeed, it generally does where there is a black as well as a white population. But I do not find that a belief in the unity of man gives the Negro in the Northern States any social recognition; nor do I find that in this lamentable war the balance of humanity has been in favour of the North. No ethnological theory or fact can shake the first principles of Christian morality; and the very knowledge that an inferior race had a separate origin, should rather arouse our generosity than awaken our dislike, and be an incentive to liberality rather than to tyranny.

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JULY 1, 1862.

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