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THIRTY VOLUMES

VOLUME EIGHT

EARLY GROPING FOR SUCCESS IN DIVERSIFIED NATURE. LEGENDS
AND TALES AS A RECREATION FORM OF DISCOVERING AND
IMPROVING TACT, PERCEPTION, SHREWDNESS, SAGACITY,
DIPLOMACY, AND OTHER QUALITIES OF MIND ESSEN-
TIAL TO SUCCESS IN TAKING QUICK AND EFFEC-
TIVE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES



*"Like him in Æsop, he whipped his horses withal, and
put his shoulder to the wheel."*

BURTON: Anatomy of Melancholy

*"And this is that Homer's golden chain which reaches
doren from heaven to earth, by which every creature is annexed
and depends upon his Creator."*

IBID

*"Fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
Sits arbitress."*

MILTON: Paradise Lost

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THE GOATS ASK FOR HORNS

THE Goats asked of Zeus that he would give them horns; for goats had no horns at first.

“You have made a fair request,” said Zeus; “but with the gift of horns is inseparably connected something else, which might be less agreeable to you.”

But the Goats persisted in their petition and the god replied, “The horns are yours.”

And so the Goats had horns and a beard. Thus for the first time Goats were bearded. Oh, how they hated that bestial beard, the possession of which afflicted them much more than the want of horns!

THE FOX AND THE STORK

“TELL me something more about the foreign countries that you have seen,” said the Fox to the much-traveled Stork.

Then the Stork began to give him the name of every track and every watery way by which he had reached the daintiest worm and the fattest frog.

“You stayed a long time in Paris, my dear friend; what was the finest dainty to be obtained there, and what wine did you find best to your taste?”



THE YOUNG SWALLOW

“WHAT are you doing there?” asked a Swallow of the busy Ant. “We are gathering provisions for the winter,” was the immediate reply.

“That is right,” said the Swallow, “and I will follow your example”; and she at once commenced to drag a pile of dead spiders and flies into her nest.

“What are you doing that for?” at last her mother asked her.

“Why, dear mother, I am making provision against the winter cold. This lesson of prudence I learned from the Ant.”

“Leave to the crawling Ant the paltry expedients of her sagacity. What is suitable for them is not suitable for their superiors, the swallows. Kindly nature has provided for us a more delightful resource. When bounteous summer ends we depart hence; we take a journey into the realm of sleep, the warm swamp receives us and there we rest without hunger or thirst, until new spring awakes us to a new life.”

HERCULES

WHEN Hercules was taken up into heaven he saluted all the gods, and Juno first. At this, all heaven, including Juno, was astounded.

“Do you treat your enemy,” he was asked, “with such preëminent honor?”

“That I do,” answered Hercules, “for it was through her persecution that I accomplished those labors which won for me a seat in heaven.”

All Olympus approved the answer of the new god, and Juno was reconciled.

THE GHOST OF SOLOMON

AN HONEST Old Man was bearing the heat and burden of the day in plowing his field and scattering the seed in the soft bosom of the kindly earth. As he stood for a moment under the broad shadow of a lime-tree, a celestial radiance shone around. The Old Man stood speechless.

“I am Solomon,” said the phantom, in a gentle voice; “what dost thou here, Old Man?”

“If thou art Solomon,” answered the Old Man, “why shouldst thou ask such a question? In my youth thou didst send me to the Ant. I considered her ways and from her I learned to be industrious and to provide for the future. I am now practising what I learned from her.”

“Thou hast not half learned thy lesson,” replied the Ghost. “Once more consider her ways and learn from the Ants to rest thyself in the winter of thy years and to enjoy all that thou hast stored.”

THE SHEPHERD AND THE NIGHTINGALE

ART thou angry, Darling of the Muses, at the noisy crowd which forms the dregs of Parnassus? Oh listen to me, and learn what once the Nightingale replied to one who addressed her. “Continue thy song, lovely Nightingale,” said a Shepherd to the bird, who sat in silence one bewitching evening in spring.

“Pooh!” replied the Nightingale; “the frogs are making such a din that I can find no pleasure in singing. Dost thou not hear them?”

“I hear them right well,” replied the Shepherd; “but thy silence is to blame for my listening to them.”

ENGLISH SECTION

JOHN GAY (1688-1732)

JOHN GAY was born at Frithelstock, Devonshire, England, in 1688, and was educated at the grammar school at Barnstaple. He began life as apprentice to a silk-weaver, but left trade for letters, publishing a poem on Wine in 1710, in the mock heroic style. He became private secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth in 1712, and produced many insignificant works, making many friends, and among them his acknowledged superior, Pope. In 1716 appeared "Trivia, or the Art of Walking in the Streets of London," a poem full of wit and humorous description. In 1720 he obtained one thousand pounds from a subscription edition of his works, but lost all in South Sea stocks. The first edition of his fables appeared in 1726. The fables of Gay are characteristic of the genial, polished, but not great poet, whose vein of fancy, bright and genuine as it was, never went far below the surface. Yet the fables are characteristically English, and furnish the best examples of this kind of literature to be found in the English language.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE BOOKSELLER

THE man who with undaunted toils
 Sails unknown seas to unknown soils,
 With various wonders feasts his sight:
 What stranger wonders does he write?
 We read, and in description view
 Creatures which Adam never knew;
 For when we risk no contradiction,
 It prompts the tongue to deal in fiction.
 Those things that startle me or you,
 I grant are strange, yet may be true.
 Who doubts that Elephants are found
 For science and for sense renown'd?
 Borri records their strength of parts,
 Extent of thought, and skill in arts;
 How they perform the law's decrees,
 And save the state the hangman's fees;
 And how by travel understand
 The language of another land.
 Let those who question this report,
 To Pliny's ancient page resort.

How learn'd was that sagacious breed!
 Who now (like them) the Greek can read?

As one of these in days of yore,
 Rummaged a shop of learning o'er;
 Not, like our modern dealers, minding
 Only the margin's breadth and binding;
 A book his curious eye detains,
 Where, with exactest care and pains,
 Were every beast and bird portray'd,
 That e'er the search of man survey'd;
 Their natures and their powers were writ
 With all the pride of human wit.
 The page, he, with attention spread,
 And thus remarked on what he said:
 "Man with strong reason is endow'd,
 A beast, scarce instinct is allow'd:
 But let his author's worth be tried,
 'Tis plain that neither was his guide.
 Can he discern the different natures,
 And weigh the power of other creatures,
 Who by the partial work hath shown,
 He knows so little of his own?
 How falsely is the spaniel drawn!
 Did man from him first learn to fawn?
 A dog,—proficient in the trade,—
 He, the chief flatterer Nature made?
 Go, Man! the ways of courts discern;
 You'll find a spaniel still might learn.
 How can the fox's theft and plunder
 Provoke his censure or his wonder?
 From courtiers' tricks and lawyers' arts,
 The fox might well improve his parts.
 The lion, wolf, and tiger's brood,
 He curses, for their thirst of blood:
 But is not man to man a prey?
 Beasts kill for hunger, men for pay."

The Bookseller, who heard him speak,
 And saw him turn a page of Greek,
 Thought, "What a genius have I found!"
 Then thus addressed, with bow profound:—
 "Learn'd Sir, if you'd employ your pen
 Against the senseless sons of men,
 Or write the history of Siam,
 No man is better pay than I am;

Or, since you're learn'd in Greek, let's see
 Something against the Trinity."
 When, wrinkling with a sneer his trunk,
 "Friend," quoth the Elephant, "you're drunk;
 E'en keep your money, and be wise;
 Leave man on man, to criticise!
 For that you ne'er can want a pen,
 Among the senseless sons of men.
 They, unprovoked, will court the fray:
 Envy's a sharper spur than pay.
 No author ever spared a brother;
 Wits are game-cocks, to one another."

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE PHEASANTS

THE Sage, awaked at early day,
 Through the deep forest took his way;
 Drawn by the music of the groves,
 Along the winding gloom he roves;
 From tree to tree the warbling throats
 Prolong the sweet alternate notes.
 But where he passed he terror threw,
 The song broke short, the warblers flew;
 The thrushes chatter'd with affright,
 And nightingales abhorr'd his sight;
 All animals before him ran,
 To shun the hateful sight of man.
 "Whence is this dread of every creature?
 Fly they our figure or our nature?"
 As thus he walk'd in musing thought,
 His ear imperfect accents caught.
 With cautious step he nearer drew,
 By the thick shade conceal'd from view.
 High on the branch a Pheasant stood,
 Around her all her listening brood;
 Proud of the blessings of her nest,
 She thus a mother's care express'd:
 "No dangers here shall circumvent;
 Within the woods enjoy content.
 Sooner the hawk or vulture trust
 Than man, of animals the worst:
 In him ingratitude you find,
 A vice peculiar to the kind:
 The sheep, whose annual fleece is dyed
 To guard his health and serve his pride;

Forced from his fold and native plain,
 Is in the cruel shambles slain.
 The swarms, who, with industrious skill,
 Their hives with wax and honey fill,
 In vain whole summer days employ'd;
 Their stores are sold, the race destroy'd.
 What tribute from the goose is paid!
 Does not her wing all science aid?
 Does it not lovers' hearts explain,
 And drudge to raise the merchant's gain?
 What now rewards this general use?
 He takes the quills, and eats the goose.
 Man, then, avoid, detest his ways,
 So safety shall prolong your days.
 When services are thus acquitted,
 Be sure we Pheasants must be spitted."

THE LADY AND THE WASP

WHAT whispers must the Beauty bear!
 What hourly nonsense haunts her ear!
 Where'er her eyes dispense their charms,
 Impertinence around her swarms.
 Did not the tender nonsense strike,
 Contempt and scorn might look dislike;
 Forbidding airs might thin the place,
 The slightest flap a fly can chase:
 But who can drive the num'rous breed?—
 Chase one, another will succeed;
 Who knows a fool, must know his brother;
 One fop will recommend another:
 And with this plague she's rightly cursed,
 Because she listen'd to the first.

As Doris, at her toilette's duty,
 Sat meditating on her beauty,
 She now was pensive, now was gay,
 And loll'd the sultry hours away.
 As thus in indolence she lies,
 A giddy Wasp around her flies;
 He now advances, now retires,
 Now to her neck and cheek aspires.
 Her fan in vain defends her charms,
 Swift he returns, again alarms;
 For by repulse he bolder grew,
 Perch'd on her lip, and sipt the dew.

She frowns,—she frets. “Good gods!” she cries,
 “Protect me from these teasing flies:
 Of all the plagues that heaven hath sent,
 A Wasp is most impertinent.”

The hovering insect thus complain'd,—
 “Am I then slighted, scorn'd, disdain'd?
 Can such offense your anger wake?
 'Twas beauty caused the bold mistake.
 Those cherry lips that breathe perfume,
 That cheek so ripe with youthful bloom,
 Make me with strong desire pursue
 The fairest peach that ever grew.”
 “Strike him not, Jenny!” Doris cries,
 “Nor murder Wasps like vulgar flies;
 For though he's free (to do him right),
 The creature's civil and polite.”
 In ecstasies, away he posts;
 Where'er he came, the favor boasts;
 Brags how her sweetest tea he sips,
 And shows the sugar on his lips.

The hint alarm'd the forward crew.
 Sure of success, away they flew:
 They share the dainties of the day,
 Round her with airy music play:
 And now they flutter, now they rest,
 Now soar again, and skim her breast.
 Nor were they banish'd till she found
 That Wasps have stings, and felt the wound.

THE MISER AND PLUTUS

THE wind was high, the window shakes,
 With sudden start the Miser wakes;
 Along the silent room he stalks,
 Looks back, and trembles as he walks.
 Each lock and every bolt he tries,
 In every nook and corner pries;
 Then opes the chest with treasure stored,
 And stands in rapture o'er his hoard.
 But now with sudden qualms possess'd,
 He wrings his hands, he beats his breast;
 By conscience stung he wildly stares,
 And thus his guilty soul declares:—



"Had the deep earth her stores confined,
 This heart had known sweet peace of mind.
 But virtue's sold. Good gods! what price
 Can recompense the pangs of vice!
 O bane of good! seducing cheat!
 Can man, weak man, thy power defeat?
 Gold banish'd honor from the mind,
 And only left the name behind;
 Gold sow'd the world with every ill;
 Gold taught the murderer's sword to kill;
 'Twas gold instructed coward hearts
 In treachery's more pernicious arts.
 Who can recount the mischiefs o'er?
 Virtue resides on earth no more!"

He spoke, and sigh'd. In angry mood
 Plutus, his god, before him stood.
 The Miser, trembling, lock'd his chest;
 The vision frown'd, and thus address'd:—
 "Whence is this vile, ungrateful rant,
 Each sordid rascal's daily cant?
 Did I, base wretch! corrupt mankind?—
 The fault's in thy rapacious mind.
 Because my blessings are abused,
 Must I be censured, cursed, accused?
 E'en Virtue's self by knaves is made
 A cloak to carry on the trade;
 And power (when lodged in their possession)
 Grows tyranny and rank oppression.
 Thus, when the villain crams his chest,
 Gold is the canker of the breast;
 'Tis avarice, insolence, and pride,
 And every shocking vice beside;
 But when to virtuous hands 'tis given,
 It blesses, like the dews of heaven;
 Like heaven, it hears the orphan's cries.
 And wipes the tears from widows' eyes.
 Their crimes on gold shall misers lay,
 Who pawned their sordid souls for pay!
 Let bravos, then, when blood is spilt,
 Upbraid the passive sword with guilt."

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY MOUSE

[Translated from *Horace, Sat. ii. 6, by Alexander Pope*]

ONCE on a time (so runs the fable)
 A Country Mouse, right hospitable,
 Received a Town Mouse at his board,
 Just as a farmer might a lord.
 A frugal Mouse upon the whole,
 Yet loved his friend and had a soul,
 Knew what was handsome and would do
 On just occasion, *coûte qui coûte*.
 He brought him bacon (nothing lean),
 Pudding that might have pleased a dean;
 Cheese, such as men in Suffolk make,
 But wish'd it Stilton for his sake;
 Yet, to his guest though no way sparing,
 He ate himself the rind and paring.
 Our courtier scarce could touch a bit,
 But show'd his breeding and his wit;
 He did his best to seem to eat,
 And cried, "I vow you're mighty neat.
 But, lord, my friend, this savage scene!
 For God's sake come, and live with men;
 Consider, mice, like men, must die,
 Both small and great, both you and I:
 Then spend your life in joy and sport;
 (This doctrine, friend, I learn'd at court)."

The veriest hermit in the nation
 May yield, God knows, to strong temptation.
 Away they came, through thick and thin
 To a tall house near Lincoln's Inn:
 ('Twas on the night of a debate,
 When all their lordships had sat late).
 Behold the place, where if a poet
 Shined in description, he might show it:
 Tell how the moonbeam trembling falls,
 And tips with silver all the walls;
 Palladian walls, Venetian doors,
 Grottesco roofs, and stucco floors:
 But let it (in a word) be said,
 The moon was up, and men a-bed,
 The napkins white, the carpet red;
 The guests withdrawn had left the treat
 And down the mice sat, "tête-à-tête."

Our courtier walks from dish to dish,
 Tastes for his friend of fowl and fish;
 Tells all their names, lays down the law:
 "Que ça est bon! Ah goûtez ça!
 That jelly's rich, this malmsey healing.
 Pray dip your whiskers and your tail in."
 Was ever such a happy swain?
 He stuffs, and swills, and stuffs again.
 "I'm quite ashamed—'tis mighty rude
 To eat so much—but all's so good.
 I have a thousand thanks to give—
 My lord alone knows how to live."

No sooner said, but from the hall
 Rush chaplain, butler, dogs, and all:
 "A rat, a rat! clap to the door"—
 The cat comes bouncing on the floor
 O for the heart of Homer's mice,
 Or gods to save them, in a trice!
 "An't, please your honor," quoth the peasant;
 "This same dessert is not so pleasant:
 Give me again my hollow tree,
 A crust of bread, and liberty."

SPANISH SECTION

TOMAS DE IRIARTE (1750-1791)

THE famous Spanish poet Tomas de Iriarte, or Yriarte, was born in 1750 at Orotava, in the Island of Teneriffe. He was educated under a learned uncle at Madrid, and began literary life by translating French plays for the royal theater. In 1771 he was appointed official translator to the government, and five years later became keeper of records to the war office. As a poet, Iriarte has but slight merit, but his "Fabulas Literarias," which appeared in 1782, is worthy of a people who produced "Don Quixote." The fables are intended to expose and correct the foibles and follies of poets and authors, and their composition was the first attempt by a Spaniard to produce original fables in the Castilian tongue.

THE SILKWORM AND THE SPIDER

THE Spider, with a scornful smile,
 Weaving with fury all the while,
 Thus to the modest Silkworm said,
 Who calmly spun her precious thread:
 "Pray, my slow sister, what d'ye say
 To this, my web, begun to-day,
 Which now, just finished, decks my cell:
 Don't it look delicate and well?"
 "It does look well and that is all."
 The Silkworm answered from her ball.

THE FLINT AND THE STEEL

THE Flint, with language harsh and high,
 Accused the Steel of cruelty,
 In striking her with all his might,
 Whene'er he wanted fire and light.
 The Steel the imputation spurned,
 And with such warmth the contest burned,
 That both, at last, agreed to slip
 Their contract of companionship.
 "Good-bye, then, madam," said the one,
 "And since my company you shun,
 And to continue with me doubt,
 We'll see what use you are, without."
 "About as much as you will be,
 Good sir," she answered, "without me."

Writers, revolve this tale of mine,
 Nor think it needless to combine
 With powers naturally strong,
 The help of study, close and long.
 Does not this fable true reveal
 The flint shines not without the steel?
 No more can talent without art,
 For both are useless when apart.

THE TEA AND THE SAGE

THE Tea, from China on her way,
 Met in some sea, or gulf, or bay
 (Would to her log I might refer!)
 The Sage, who thus accosted her:

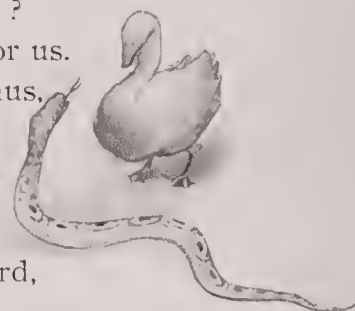
"Sister, — ahoy! ho! whither bound?"
 "I leave," she said, "my native ground,
 For Europe's markets, where, I'm told,
 They purchase me by weight of gold."
 "And I," the Sage returned, "am seeking
 The route to Canton, or to Peking;
 Your Chinese use me largely, in
 Their cookery and medicine;
 They know my virtues, nor deny
 The price I ask, however high,
 While Europe scorns me, just, indeed.
 As if I were the vilest weed.
 Go: and good luck t'ye; know full well
 That you are sure enough to sell,
 For nations all (fools that they are!),
 Value whatever comes from far,
 And give their money, nothing loath,
 For anything of foreign growth."

I humbly ask the Sage's pardon
 (His race is honored in my garden),
 The sneer parenthetic he made
 Attacks the very life of trade;
 But had his satire been designed
 For trade of literary kind,
 I had completely acquiesced
 In all the censure it expressed.
 How frequently, alas! we meet
 Men who can readily repeat
 Whole poems in a foreign tongue,
 That Boileau wrote, or Tasso sung,
 Yet scarcely know what land may claim
 The honor of a Spenser's name.

THE DUCK AND THE SERPENT

A SELF-CONCEITED Duck, they say,
 Was waddling from her pond one day,
 "What other race can boast," she cried,
 "The many gifts to ours allied?
 Earth — water — air — are all for us.
 When I am tired of walking thus,
 I fly, if so I take the whim,
 Or, if it pleases me, I swim."

A cunning Serpent overheard
 The boasting of the clumsy bird,



And, with contempt and scorn inflamed,
 Came hissing up, and thus exclaimed:
 "It strikes me, ma'am there's small occasion
 For your just uttered proclamation;
 These gifts of yours shine rather dim,
 Since, neither like the trout you swim,
 Nor, like the deer, step swift and light,
 Nor, match the eagle in your flight."

They err who think that merit clings
 To knowledge slight of many things;
 He who his fellows would excel,
 What'er he does should do it well.

THE MUFF, THE FAN, AND THE PARASOL

IT SOUNDS presumptuous and ill
 To boast of universal skill,
 But 'tis a scarce less fault, I own,
 To serve one sort of use alone.
 An idle Parasol, one day,
 Within a lady's chamber lay,
 And having nothing else to do,
 Addressing his companions two,
 Reclining near, a Muff and Fan,
 He thus insultingly began,
 Using that form of dialect
 In which, if Æsop is correct,
 The brass and earthen jars of old
 Convers'd as down the stream they rolled:
 "Oh! sirs, ye merit mighty praise!
 You, Muff, may do for wintry days,
 A corner is your lot in spring;
 While you, Fan, are a useless thing,
 When cold succeeds to heat, for neither
 Can change yourself to suit the weather.
 Learn, if you're able, to possess,
 Like me a double usefulness,
 For winter's rain I help to shun
 And guard in summer from the sun."

THE COCK AND HIS COMBATS

A HAUGHTY Cock, who thought, no doubt,
 That he was mighty brave, fell out
 (It was a quarrel of his picking)
 With a young sturdy Bantam Chicken.
 Such high words passed between the two,
 That both at last indignant flew,
 Flapped, pecked, and spurred, like fiends of hell,
 And the young dunghill fought so well,
 He quickly made the other yield
 The battle, and the battle-field.
 "Hem!" said the conquered sultan, sneering
 (But not till he was out of hearing),
 "He'll make no bad a cock, I vow,
 The little fellow's youthful now."
 He never fought that chicken more,
 But, from an ancient grudge he bore
 Against an aged cock, whose scars
 Showed him a veteran in the wars,
 Our champion challenged him one day
 And got so worsted in the fray
 That, with the two defeats together,
 He was quite stripped of coat and feather.
 As, thus defaced in every feature,
 He slunk away — "The poor old creature!"
 He muttered, "Limb by limb I'd tear him —
 Only he dotes, and so I spare him."

In strife of literary kind,
 Authors, this lesson bear in mind —
 With whomsoever you engage,
 Judge not their talents by their age.

RUSSIAN SECTION

IVAN ANDREEVITCH KRILOFF (1768–1844)

IVAN ANDREEVITCH KRILOFF, or Kryloff, is to Russia what Gay is to England, La Fontaine to France, and Iriarte to Spain. He was the son of a distinguished military man, and on his father's death secured a post in the civil service at St. Petersburg, but gave up the uncongenial employment on his mother's death, in 1788. He was, indeed, taken by

the spell cast over so many clever youths by the prospects of a literary life; he wrote a play, tried to start a magazine, and was for some time private secretary to the military governor of Livonia. But a settled life did not please this slovenly, absent-minded, and ill-mannered poet, and he seems to have wandered from town to town for many years, haunting taverns and indulging a passion for card-playing. His first collection of fables appeared in 1809, and in 1812 he was appointed to a post in the Imperial Public Library. He died in 1844, while holding the position of head of the Russian book department.

The fables of Kriloff are among the finest to be found in any language. They were enthusiastically received by the Russian people, and the author was rewarded by the diploma and gold medal of the Academy of Sciences during his lifetime, and by a fine statue in the Summer Garden after his death. Wit, imagination, inexhaustible invention abound in these apologues, whose style is flawless. The directness and idiomatic vigor of Swift are united with a poetic color and vivacity which make each fable a jewel of the purest water. The wisdom and point which Kriloff's works possess are only equaled by the perfection of their poetic form.

THE ASS AND THE NIGHTINGALE

AN Ass happened to see a Nightingale one day, and said to it:—

“Listen, my dear. They say you have a great mastery over song. I have long wished very much to hear you sing, and to judge as to whether your talent is really so great.”

On this the Nightingale began to make manifest its art — whistled in countless ways, sobbed, sustained notes, passed from one song to another; at one time let her voice die away, and echoed the distant murmur of the languishing reed; at another, poured through the wood a shower of tiny notes. They all listened to the favorite singer of Aurora. The breezes died away; the feathered choir was hushed; the cattle lay down on the grass. Scarcely breathing, the shepherd reveled in it, and only now and then, as he listened to it, smiled on the shepherdess.

At length the singer ended. Then the Ass, bending its head toward the ground, observed:—

“It's tolerable. To speak the truth, one can listen to you without being bored. But it's a pity you don't know our Cock. You would sing a great deal better if you were to take a few lessons from him.”

Having heard such a judgment, our poor Nightingale took to its wings and flew far away.

THE GRANDEE

ONCE, in the days of old, a certain Grandee passed from his richly dight bed into the realm which Pluto sways. To speak more simply, he died. And so, as was anciently the custom, he appeared before the justice-seat of Hades. Straightway he was asked, "Where were you born? What have you been?"

"I was born in Persia, and my rank was that of a Satrap. But, as my health was feeble during my lifetime, I never exercised any personal control in my province, but left everything to be done by my secretary."

"But you — what did you do?"

"I ate, drank, and slept; and I signed everything he set before me."

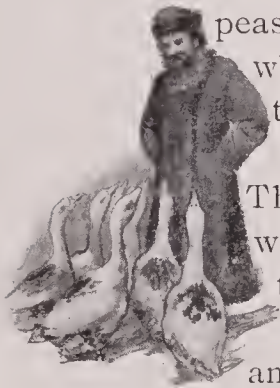
"In with him, then, at once into paradise!"

"How now! Where is the justice of this?" thereupon exclaimed Mercury, forgetting all politeness.

"Ah, brother," answered Eacus, "you know nothing about it. But don't you see this? The dead man was a fool. What would have happened if he, who had such power in his hands, had unfortunately interfered in business? Why, he would have ruined the whole province. The tears which would have flowed then would have been beyond all calculation. Therefore it is that he has gone into paradise, because he did not interfere with business."

THE GEESE

A PEASANT, with a long rod in his hand, was driving some Geese to a town where they were to be sold; and, to tell the truth, he did not treat them over-politely. In hopes of making a good bargain, he was hastening on so as not to lose the market-day (and when gain is concerned, geese and men alike are apt to suffer). I do not blame the peasant; but the Geese talked about him in a different spirit, and, whenever they met any passers-by, abused him to them in such terms as these:—



"Is it possible to find any Geese more unfortunate than we are? This Moujik harasses us so terribly, and chases us about just as if we were common geese. The ignoramus does know that he ought to pay us reverence, seeing that we are the noble descendants of those geese to whom Rome was once indebted for her salvation, and in whose honor even feast-days were specially appointed there."

"And do you want to have honor paid you on that account?" a passer-by asked them.

"Why, our ancestors ——"

“ I know that — I have read all about it; but I want to know this — of what use have you been yourselves ? ”

“ Why, our ancestors saved Rome ! ”

“ Quite so; but what have you done ? ”

“ We ? Nothing. ”

“ Then what merit is there in you ? Let your ancestors rest in peace — they justly received honorable reward; but you, my friends, are only fit to be roasted ! ”

It would be easy to make this fable still more intelligible; but I am afraid of irritating the Geese.

THE PEBBLE AND THE DIAMOND

A DIAMOND, which some one had lost, lay for some time on the high road. At last it happened that a merchant picked it up. By him it was offered to the king, who bought it, had it set in gold, and made it one of the ornaments of the royal crown. Having heard of this, a Pebble began to make a fuss. The brilliant fate of the Diamond fascinated it; and, one day, seeing a Moujik passing, it besought him thus:

“ Do me a kindness, fellow-countryman, and take me with you to the capital. Why should I go on suffering here in rain and mud, while our Diamond is, men say, in honor there ? I don't understand why it has been treated with such respect. Side by side with me here it lay so many years; it is just such a stone as I am — my close companion. Do take me ! How can one tell ? If I am seen there, I too, perhaps, may be found worthy of being turned to account. ”

The Moujik took the stone into his lumbering cart, and conveyed it to the city. Our stone tumbled into the cart, thinking that it would so soon be sitting by the side of the Diamond. But a quite different fate befell it. It really was turned to account, but only to mend a hole in the road.

THE MAN AND HIS SHADOW

THERE was a certain Original who must needs desire to catch his own Shadow. He makes a step or two toward it, but it moves away before him. He quickens his pace; it does the same. At last he takes to running; but the quicker he goes, the quicker runs the Shadow also, utterly refusing to give itself up, just as if it had been a treasure. But see ! our eccentric friend suddenly turns round, and walks away from it. And presently he looks behind him; the Shadow runs after him now.

Ladies fair, I have often observed — what do you suppose? — no, no; I assure you I am not going to speak about you — that Fortune treats us in a similar way. One man tries with all his might to seize the goddess, and only loses his time and his trouble. Another seems, to all appearance, to be running out of her sight; but, no: she herself takes a pleasure in pursuing him.

THE DIVERS

A CERTAIN King could not make up his mind as to whether knowledge and science produce more good or harm. He consulted divers learned men on the subject, but they could not solve the problem to his satisfaction. At last, one day, he met a venerable and remarkably intelligent hermit, to whom he confided his doubts, and who favored him with the following apologue:*

“There was once a fisherman, in India, who lived on the seacoast. After a long life of poverty and privation, he died, leaving three sons. They, seeing that their nets brought them in but a scanty livelihood, and detesting their father’s vocation, determined to make the sea yield them a richer recompense — not fish, but pearls. So, as they knew how to swim and to dive, they gave themselves up to collecting that form of tribute from it. But the three brothers met with very different kinds of success.

“The first, the laziest of the family, spent his time in sauntering along the shore. He had an objection to wetting even so much as his feet, so he confined his expectations to picking up such pearls as the waves might wash ashore. But the result of this laziness of his was that he scarcely made enough to keep him alive. As to the second, he used to dive and find rich pearls at the bottom of the sea, never sparing any pains, and knowing how to choose those depths only which were within his power to sound.

“But the third brother, troubled by a craving after vast treasures, reasoned with himself as follows: ‘It is true that there are pearls which one can find near the shore; but what treasures, apparently, might I not expect if I could only succeed in reaching the lowest depths of the open sea! There, no doubt, lie heaps of countless riches — corals, pearls, and precious stones — all of which one might pick up and carry away at will.’ Captivated by this idea, the foolish fellow straightway sought the open sea, chose the spot where the depths seemed blackest, and plunged into the abyss. But his recklessness cost him his life; for the deep swallowed him down, and he never returned to the light of day.

*I have thought it best to abridge the introduction, which is of inordinate length in the original.

PART III

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN ARABIC
LEGENDS

INTRODUCTION

IT HAS been said that the Bible is not finished and that it will not be finished until the human heart ceases to glow with emotion and conscience ceases to bear witness to moral truth. Whatever the sectarian may say about such thoughts, it is certain that they reach to the very roots of revelation and religion, to that deepest well in the human soul which the mystics call "the ground," and whence flow all imagination and religious feeling; and they carry with them thence the secrets of the deep, *viz.*, that the Infinite is forever pouring Itself forth, revealing Itself, or, "is coming to be," as the philosopher would say.

Men differ in their vision of the revelation of the Infinite. Some will see it only in the cosmic spheres, others in morals, others in soul-unfoldments; and others, again, place the fact under the influence of their imagination, and in the glow of the emotions they pour forth poetry and other literature. But if the facts underlying all these forms are really the same and fully express "the coming to be" of the Divine, then all these forms must in the main agree and mutually support each other, and they do. No matter how widely they differ, they all stir that mysterious something in the constitution of man which holds relationship with "the essential spirit of things."

The following Old Testament stories from Arabic sources illustrate what I have said. They differ essentially from the Hebrew stories of the same name, and they are fancy-free pranks, utterly disregarding historic time and geographic space; but they overflow with poetic imagery of a religious character, and they use Hebrew and Talmudic tradition in such a way that their unconscious poetry utters itself in a symbolism that is full of spiritual truth. In this way they rise high in value, and though they disregard history and geography, they have their place in literature, if not in religious lore.

There are four school views of the Old Testament, and it is to the last of these that these stories belong. One school is the radical one. It is represented by such men as Wellhausen and Nöldeke, who deny the Old Testament narratives all historic truth. Another is the comparative school which calls Adolph Kuhn and Max Müller its masters. It reduces all Old Testament characters to solar heroes and moon goddesses. Both of these schools are fought bitterly by the orthodox adherents of the Book. They have caused numerous excavations to be made in Bible lands, and they hold all Old Testament characters to be historic persons. The last school is the one which considers the Old Testament simply as literature and which, like the scholars of the Higher Criticism, treats the Book to literary criticisms according to standards adopted for other books.

With the exception of a few later additions, the following legends are derived from Mohammed himself, and their essential features are found in the Koran. The translator, Dr. G. Weil, has, besides the Koran and the commentaries upon it, used the following manuscripts:—

(1) The Chamis, by Husein Ibn Mohammed, Ibn Ahasur Addiarbekri, which, as the introduction to the biography of Mohammed, contains many legends respecting the ancient prophets, especially Adam, Abraham, and Solomon.

(2) The Dsachirat Alulum Wanatidjal Alfuhum (storehouse of wisdom and fruits of knowledge), by Ahmed Ibn Zein Alabidin Albekri, in which also the ancient legends from Adam to Christ are prefixed to the History of Islam, and more especially the lives of Moses and Aaron minutely narrated.

(3) A collection of legends by anonymous authors. (No. 909 in the Arabian manuscripts in the library of the Duke of Gotha.)

(4) The Legends of the Prophets (Kissat Alanbija), by Mohammed Ibn Ahmed Alkissai.

In compiling the stories, Mohammed drew mainly upon oral traditions and the narratives of Jews and Christians with whom he came in contact. He learned only late in life to write and even to read Arabic, and was unquestionably ignorant of every other spoken or written language. He lived on intimate terms with Abd Allah Ibn Salam, a learned Jew, and Salman, the Persian, who, before he became a Mohammedan, was successively a magician, a Jew, and a Christian. From these and a monk, Bahira, Mohammed derived his material.

The general ideas of the narratives are two: the unity of God, and the prophets. The first idea is the main teaching of Mohammed and is constantly emphasized in the Koran; it was the doctrine wherewith he conquered the wild and polytheistic Arabs. The second idea of Mohammed's teachings and of the Old Testament stories found in the following is that God's teachings to men come through prophets, and that Mohammed himself is the last and final of a long line beginning with Adam. Among the prophets he dwelt most on Abraham and Ismael, and changed and amplified the traditions to suit his own purposes. Mohammed acknowledged Christ as the living Word and as a great prophet, but he rejected the doctrine which placed Christ and his mother on a level with the Most High God.

The stories which are reproduced in the following pages were evidently all prepared for a purpose, *viz.*, to teach Mohammed's doctrine. They are to that end realistic and free from all obscurity or attempts at style. But they are nevertheless interesting to us of this date, because of their romance and folk-lore. We meet Oriental imagery in Iblis's resources and ingenious ways of getting into paradise, and there is moral pathos in the tale of Adam who was flung out of paradise through the gate of Repentance, teaching him that he might return through contrition, while Eve was sent out through the gate of Mercy. How touching is the folk-tale that Eve's tears flowing into the ocean were changed into costly pearls, while those that fell upon the earth brought forth all beautiful flowers! Ideas of this order touch any unsophisticated soul and create that feeling of pleasure and emotion which we expect from good imaginative literature.

I think the Editor has conferred a favor upon the readers of this volume by introducing these Mohammedan renderings of Old Testament narratives.

C. H. A. BJERREGAARD.

ADAM

THE most authentic records of antiquity which have come down to us state that Adam was created on Friday afternoon at the hour of Assr.*

The four most exalted angels, Gabriel, Michael, Israfil, and Israil, were commanded to bring from the four corners of the earth the dust out of which Allah formed the body of Adam, all save the head and heart. For these He employed exclusively the sacred earth of Mecca and Medina, from the very spots on which, in later times, the holy Kaaba and the sepulcher of Mohammed were erected.

Even before it was animated, Adam's beautiful form excited the admiration of the angels who were passing by the gates of paradise where Allah had laid it down. But Iblis coveted man's noble form, and the spiritual and lovely expression of his countenance, and said, therefore, to his fellows, "How can this hollow piece of earth be well pleasing in your sight? Nothing but weakness and frailty may be expected of this creature." When all the inhabitants of heaven, save Iblis, had gazed on Adam in long and silent wonder, they burst out in praises to Allah, the creator of the first man, who was so tall, that when he stood erect upon the earth his head reached to the seventh heaven.

Allah then directed the angels to bathe the Soul of Adam, which he had created a thousand years before his body, in the sea of glory which proceedeth from himself, and commanded her to animate his yet lifeless form. The Soul hesitated, for she was unwilling to exchange the boundless heavens for this narrow home; but Allah said, "Thou must animate Adam even against thy will; and as the punishment of thy disobedience, thou shalt one day be separated from him also against thy will." Allah then breathed on her with such violence that she rushed through the nostrils of Adam into his head. On reaching his eyes, they were opened, and he saw the throne of Allah, with the inscription, "There is but one God, and Mohammed is his Messenger." The Soul then penetrated to his ears, and he heard the angels praising Allah; thereupon his own tongue was loosed, and he cried, "Blessed be thou, my Creator, the only One and Eternal!" and Allah answered, "For this end wast thou created; thou and thy descendants shall worship me; so shall ye ever obtain grace and mercy." The Soul at last pervaded all the limbs of Adam; and when she had reached his feet, she gave him the power to rise; but, on rising, he was obliged to shut his eyes, for a light shone

*The hour of Assr is between noon and evening, and is set apart by the Muslim for the performance of his third daily prayer.

on him from the throne of the Lord which he was unable to endure; and pointing with one hand toward it, while he shaded his eyes with the other, he inquired, "O Allah! what flames are those?" "It is the light of a prophet who shall descend from thee and appear on earth in the latter times. By my glory, only for his sake have I created thee and the whole world. In heaven his name is Ahmed, but he shall be called Mohammed on earth, and he shall restore mankind from vice and falsehood to the path of virtue and truth."

All created things were then assembled before Adam, and Allah taught him the names of all beasts, of birds, and of fish; the manner in which they are sustained and propagated, and explained their peculiarities, and the ends of their existence. Finally, the angels were convoked, and Allah commanded them to bow down to Adam, as the most free and perfect of His creatures, and as the only one that was animated by His breath. Israfil was the first to obey, whence Allah confided to him the book of Fate. The other angels followed his example: Iblis alone was disobedient, saying, with disdain, "Shall I, who am created of fire, worship a being formed of the dust?" He was therefore expelled from heaven, and the entrance into paradise was forbidden him.

Adam breathed more freely after the removal of Iblis; and by command of Allah, he addressed the myriads of angels who were standing around him, in praise of His omnipotence and the wonders of His universe; and on this occasion he manifested to the angels that he far surpassed them in wisdom, and more especially in the knowledge of languages, for he knew the name of every created thing in seventy different tongues.*

After this discourse, Allah presented him, through Gabriel, with a bunch of grapes from paradise, and when he had eaten them he fell into a deep sleep. The Lord then took a rib from Adam's side, and formed a woman of it, whom he called Hava (Eve), for he said, I have taken her from (hai) the living. She bore a perfect resemblance to Adam; but her features were more delicate than his, and her eyes shone with a sweeter luster, her hair was longer, and divided into seven hundred braids; her form was lighter, and her voice more soft and pure.

While Allah was endowing Eve with every female charm, Adam was dreaming of a second human being resembling himself. Nor was this

* When the Lord intended to create man, he consulted with the angels, and said to them, "We will create man after our image." But they replied, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? What are his excellences?" He said, "His wisdom exceeds your own." He then took all kinds of wild beasts and birds, and when he asked the angels to give their names, they were not able to do so. After the creation, he brought these animals to Adam, who, on being asked their names, replied immediately, "This is an ox, this is an ass, that a horse, a camel," etc.

strange, for had he not seen in pairs all the creatures which had been presented to him? When, therefore, he awoke, and found Eve near him, he desired to embrace her; yet, although her love exceeded his own, she forbade him and said, "Allah is my Lord; it is only with His permission that I may be thine! Besides, it is not meet that a woman should be wedded without a marriage gift." Adam then prayed the angel Gabriel to intercede for him with Allah, that he might obtain Eve for his wife, and to inquire what marriage gift would be demanded. The angel soon returned, and said, "Eve is thine, for Allah has created her only for thee! Love her as thyself, and treat her with indulgence and kindness. The marriage gift which he requires of thee is, that thou shouldst pray twenty times for Mohammed, his beloved, whose body shall one day be formed out of thy flesh and blood, but whose soul has dwelt in Allah's presence many thousand years before the creation of the world." *



Ridwhan, the guardian of Eden, came leading Meimun, the winged horse, and a fleet she-camel. The one he presented to Adam, the other to Eve. The angel Gabriel assisted them in mounting, and conducted them to paradise, where all the angels and animals present saluted them with the words, "Hail! ye parents of Mohammed!"

In the midst of paradise there stood a green silken tent, supported on golden pillars, and in the midst of it there was a throne, on which Adam seated himself with Eve, whereupon the curtains of the tent closed around them of their own accord.

When Adam and Eve were afterward walking through the garden, Gabriel came and commanded them, in the name of Allah, to go and bathe in one of the four rivers of paradise. Allah himself then said to them, "I have appointed this garden for your abode; it will shelter you from cold and heat, from hunger and thirst. Take, at your discretion, of every thing that it contains; only one of its fruits shall be denied you. Beware that ye transgress not this one command, and watch against the wily rancor of Iblis! He is your enemy, because he was overthrown on your account; his cunning is infinite, and he aims at your destruction."

*The idea that many things existed before the creation of the world is purely Jewish. The Mussulmans adopted it. Some of them maintained that the Koran had existed before the world, which assertion excited many bloody contests among them. The "Midrash Jalkut," p. 7, says: Seven things were in existence before the creation of the world: The Thora, Repentance, Paradise, Hell, the Throne of God, the name of the Messiah, and the holy Temple. Some maintain that the Throne and the Thora really existed, while the Lord only thought of the other five before he created the world.

The newly-created pair attended to Allah's words, and lived a long time, some say five hundred years, in paradise without approaching the forbidden tree. But Iblis also had listened to Allah, and resolving to lead man into sin, wandered constantly in the outskirts of heaven, seeking to glide unobserved into paradise. But its gates were shut, and guarded by the angel Ridwhan. One day the peacock came out of the garden. He was then the finest of the birds of paradise, for his plumage shone like pearl and emerald, and his voice was so melodious that he was appointed to sing the praises of Allah daily in the main streets of heaven.

Iblis, on seeing him, said to himself, "Doubtless this beautiful bird is very vain: perhaps I may be able to induce him by flattery to bring me secretly into the garden."

When the peacock had gone so far from the gates that he could no longer be overheard by Ridwhan, Iblis said to him:—

"Most wonderful and beautiful bird! art thou of the birds of paradise?"

"I am; but who art thou, who seemest frightened as if some one did pursue thee?"

"I am one of those cherubim who are appointed to sing without ceasing the praises of Allah, but have glided away for an instant to visit the paradise which he has prepared for the faithful. Wilt thou conceal me under thy beautiful wings?"

"Why should I do an act which must bring the displeasure of Allah upon me?"

"Take me with thee, charming bird, and I will teach thee three mysterious words, which shall preserve thee from sickness, age, and death."

"Must, then, the inhabitants of paradise die?"

"All, without exception, who know not the three words which I possess."

"Speakest thou the truth?"

"By Allah, the Almighty!"

The peacock believed him, for he did not even dream that any creature would swear falsely by its maker; yet, fearing lest Ridwhan might search him too closely on his return, he steadily refused to take Iblis along with him, but promised to send out the serpent, who might more easily discover the means of introducing him unobservedly into the garden.

Now the serpent was at first the queen of all beasts. Her head was like rubies, and her eyes like emerald. Her skin shone like a mirror of various hues. Her hair was soft like that of a noble virgin; and her form resembled the stately camel; her breath was sweet like musk and amber, and all her words were songs of praise. She fed on saffron, and her resting-places were on the blooming borders of the beautiful Can-

tharus.* She was created a thousand years before Adam, and destined to be the playmate of Eve.

“This fair and prudent being,” said the peacock to himself, “must be even more desirous than I to remain in eternal youth and vigor, and will undoubtedly dare the displeasure of Ridwhan at the price of the three invaluable words.” He was right in his conjecture, for no sooner had he informed the serpent of his adventure than she exclaimed, “Can it be so? Shall I be visited by death? Shall my breath expire, my tongue be paralyzed, and my limbs become impotent? Shall my eyes and ears be closed in night? And this noble form of mine, shall it perish in the dust? Never, never! Even if Ridwhan’s wrath should light upon me, I will hasten to the cherub, and will lead him into paradise, so he but teach me the three mysterious words.”

The serpent ran forthwith out of the gate, and Iblis repeated to her what he had said to the peacock, confirming his words by an oath.

“How can I bring thee into paradise unobserved?” inquired the serpent.

“I will contract myself into so small a bulk that I shall find room in a cavity of thy teeth!”

“But how shall I answer Ridwhan if he addresses me?”

“Fear nothing; I will utter holy names that shall render him speechless.”

The serpent then opened her mouth: Iblis flew into it, and, seating himself in the hollow part of her front teeth, poisoned them to all eternity. When they had passed Ridwhan, who was not able to utter a sound, the serpent opened her mouth again, expecting that the cherub would resume his natural shape, but Iblis preferred to remain where he was, and to speak to Adam from the serpent’s mouth, and in her name. After some resistance, she consented, from fear of Ridwhan, and from her anxiety to obtain the mysterious words. Arrived at Eve’s tent, Iblis heaved a deep sigh: the first which envy had forced from any living breast.

“Why art thou so cast down to-day, my beloved serpent?” inquired Eve, who had heard the sigh.

“I am anxious for the future destiny of thee and of thy husband,” replied Iblis, imitating the voice of the serpent.

“How! Do we not possess in this garden of Eden all that we can desire?”

“True; and yet the best of the fruits of this garden, and the only one which can procure you perfect felicity, is denied you.”

“Have we not fruits in abundance of every taste and color? why should we regret this one?”

* One of the rivers of paradise.

“ If thou knewest why this fruit is denied you, all the rest would afford thee no pleasure.”

“ Knowest thou the reason ? ”

“ I do; and it is precisely this knowledge which fills my heart with care; for while all the fruits which are given you bring with them weakness, disease, old age, and death, that is, the entire cessation of life, this forbidden fruit alone bestows eternal youth and vigor.”

“ Thou hast never spoken of these things until now, beloved serpent; whence derivest thou this knowledge ? ”

“ An angel informed me of it, whom I met under the forbidden tree.”

Eve answered, “ I will go and speak with him ”; and, leaving her tent, she hurried toward the tree.

On the instant, Iblis, who knew Eve’s curiosity, sprang out of the serpent’s mouth, and was standing under the forbidden tree, in the shape of an angel, but with a human face, before Eve had reached it.

“ Who art thou, singular being,” she inquired, “ whose like I have never seen ? ”

“ I was man, but have become an angel.”

“ By what means ? ”

“ By eating of this blessed fruit, which an envious God had forbidden me to taste on pain of death. I long submitted to his command, until I became old and frail; my eyes lost their luster and grew dim, my ears no longer heard, my teeth decayed, and I could neither eat without pain nor speak with distinctness. My hands trembled, my feet shook, my head hung down upon my breast, my back was bent, and my whole appearance became at last so frightful that all the inhabitants of paradise fled from me. I then longed for death, and expecting to meet it by eating of this fruit, I stretched out my hands and took of it; but lo! it had scarcely touched my lips, when I became strong and beautiful as at first; and though many thousand years have since elapsed, I am not sensible of the slightest change either in my appearance or in my energies.”

“ Speakest thou the truth ? ”

“ By Allah, who created me, I do.”

Eve trusted to his oath, and plucked an ear of the wheat-tree.

Now, before Adam’s sin, wheat grew upon the finest tree of paradise. Its trunk was of gold, its branches were of silver, and its leaves of emerald. From every branch there sprung seven ears of ruby; each ear contained five grains, and every grain was white as snow, sweet as honey, fragrant as musk, and as large as an ostrich’s egg. Eve ate one of these grains, and finding it more pleasant than all she had hitherto tasted, she took a second one and presented it to her husband.

Adam resisted long — our doctors say, a whole hour of paradise, which means eighty years of our time on earth — but when he observed

that Eve remained fair and happy as before, he yielded to her importunity at last, and ate the second grain of wheat, which she had had constantly with her, and presented to him three times every day.

Scarcely had Adam received the fruit when his crown rose toward heaven, his rings fell from his fingers, and his silken robe dropped from him. Eve, too, stood spoiled of her ornaments and naked before him, and they heard how all these things cried to them with one voice, "Woe unto you! your calamity is great, and your mourning will be long: we were created for the obedient only: farewell until the resurrection!" The throne which had been erected for them in the tent thrust them away and cried, "Rebels, depart!" The horse, Meimun, upon which Adam attempted to fly, would not suffer him to mount, and said, "Hast thou thus kept the covenant of Allah?"

All the creatures of paradise then turned from them, and besought Allah to remove the human pair from that hallowed spot. Allah himself addressed Adam in a voice of thunder, and said, "Wast thou not commanded to abstain from this fruit, and forewarned of the cunning of Iblis, thy foe?" Adam attempted to flee from these upbraidings, and Eve would have followed him; but was held fast by the branches of the tree Talh, and Eve was entangled in her own disheveled hair, while a voice from the tree exclaimed, "From the wrath of Allah there is no escape: submit to his divine decree! Leave this paradise," continued Allah, in tones of wrath, "both you, and the creatures which have seduced you to transgress: by the sweat of your brow alone shall you earn your bread; the earth shall henceforth be your abode, and its possessions shall fill your hearts with envy and malice! Eve shall be visited with all kinds of sickness and bear children in pain. The peacock shall be deprived of his voice, and the serpent of her feet. The darkest caverns of the earth shall be her dwelling-place, dust shall be her food, and to kill her, bring sevenfold reward. But Iblis shall depart into the eternal pains of hell."

Hereupon they were hurled down from paradise with such precipitancy that Adam and Eve could scarcely snatch a leaf from one of the trees wherewith to cover themselves. Adam was flung out through the Gate of Repentance, teaching him that he might return through contrition; Eve through the Gate of Mercy; the peacock and the serpent through the Gate of Wrath, but Iblis through that of the Curse.

Adam came down on the island Serendib, Eve on Djidda, the serpent fell into the Sahara, the peacock into Persia, and Iblis dropped into the torrent Aila.

When Adam touched the earth, the eagle said to the whale, with whom he had hitherto lived on friendly terms, and had whiled away

many an hour in pleasant converse on the shores of the Indian Ocean, "We must now part forever; for the lowest depths of the sea and the loftiest mountain tops will henceforth scarcely preserve us from the cunning and malice of men."

Adam's distress in his solitude was so great that his beard began to grow, though his face had hitherto been smooth; and this new appearance increased his grief until he heard a voice which said to him, "The beard is the ornament of man upon the earth, and distinguishes him from the weaker woman."

Adam shed such an abundance of tears that all beasts and birds satisfied their thirst therewith; but some of them sunk into the earth, and, as they still contained some of the juices of his food in paradise, produced the most fragrant trees and spices.

Eve was also desolate in Djidda, for she did not see Adam, although he was so tall that his head touched the lowest heaven, and the songs of the angels were distinctly audible to him. She wept bitterly, and her tears, which flowed into the ocean, were changed into costly pearls, while those which fell on the earth brought forth all beautiful flowers.

Adam and Eve lamented so loudly that the east wind carried Eve's voice to Adam, while the west wind bore his to Eve. She wrung her hands over her head, which women in despair are still in the habit of doing; while Adam laid his right hand on his beard, which custom is still followed by men in sorrow unto this day.

The tears flowed at last in such torrents from Adam's eyes, that those of his right eye started the Euphrates, while those of his left set the Tigris in motion.

All nature wept with him, and the birds, and beasts, and insects, which had fled from Adam by reason of his sin, were now touched by his lamentations, and came back to manifest their sympathy.

First came the locusts, for they were formed out of the earth which remained after Adam was created. Of these there are seven thousand different kinds, of every color and size, some even as large as an eagle. They are governed by a king, to whom Allah reveals his will whenever he intends to chasten a wicked people, such as, for instance, the Egyptians were at the time of Pharaoh. The black letters on the back of their wings are ancient Hebrew, and signify, "There is but one only God. He overcomes the mighty, and the locusts are part of his armies, which he sends against sinners."

When at last the whole universe grew loud with lamentation, and all created beings, from the smallest insect up to the angels who hold whole worlds in one hand, were weeping with Adam, Allah sent Gabriel to him with the words which were destined to save also the prophet Jonah in the whale's belly: —

“There is no God besides thee. I have sinned; forgive me through Mohammed, thy last and greatest prophet, whose name is engraved upon thy holy throne.”

As soon as Adam had pronounced these words with penitent heart, the portals of heaven were opened to him again, and Gabriel cried, “Allah has accepted thy repentance. Pray to him, and he will grant all thy requests, and even restore thee to paradise at the appointed time.” Adam prayed:—

“Defend me against the future artifices of Iblis, my foe!”

Allah replied:—

“Say continually there is no God but one, and thou shalt wound him as with a poisoned arrow.”

“Will not the meats and drinks of the earth, and its dwellings, ensnare me?”

“Drink water, eat clean animals slain in the name of Allah, and build mosques for thy abode; so shall Iblis have no power over thee.”

“But if he pursue me with evil thoughts and dreams in the night?”

“Then rise from thy couch and pray.”

“O Allah! how shall I always distinguish between good and evil?”

“I will grant thee my guidance: two angels shall dwell in thy heart; one to warn thee against sin, the other to lead thee to the practice of good.”

“Lord, assure me of thy pardon also for my future sins.”

“This thou canst only gain by works of righteousness! I shall punish sin but once, and reward sevenfold the good which thou shalt do.”

At the same time the angel Michael was sent to Eve, announcing to her also the mercy of Allah.

“With what weapons,” inquired she, “shall I, who am weak in heart and mind, fight against sin?”

“Allah has endued thee with the feeling of shame, and through its power thou shalt subdue thy passions, even as man conquers his own by faith.”

“Who shall protect me against the power of man, who is not only stronger in body and mind, but whom also the law prefers as heir and witness?”

“His love and compassion toward thee, which I have put into his heart.”

“Will Allah grant me no other token of his favor?”

“Thou shalt be rewarded for all the pains of motherhood, and the death of a woman in childbed shall be accounted as martyrdom.”

Iblis, emboldened by the pardon of the human pair, ventured also to pray for a mitigation of his sentence, and obtained its deferment until the resurrection, as well as an unlimited power over sinners who do not accept the word of Allah.

“Where shall I dwell in the meantime?” said he.

“In ruins, in tombs, and all other unclean places shunned by man!”

“What shall be my food?”

“All things slain in the name of idols.”

“How shall I quench my thirst?”

“With wine and intoxicating liquors!”

“What shall occupy my leisure hours?”

“Music, song, love-poetry, and dancing.”

“What is my watchword?”

“The curse of Allah until the day of judgment.”

“But how shall I contend with man, to whom thou has granted two guardian angels, and who has received thy revelation?”

“Thy progeny shall be more numerous than his; for every man that is born, there shall come into the world seven evil spirits; but they shall be powerless against the faithful.”

Allah then made a covenant with the descendants of Adam. He touched Adam's back, and lo! the whole human family which shall be born to the end of time issued forth from it, as small as ants, and ranged themselves right and left.

At the head of the former stood Mohammed, with the prophets and the rest of the faithful, whose radiant whiteness distinguished them from the sinners, who were standing on Adam's left, headed by Kabil (Cain), the murderer of his brother.

Allah then acquainted the progenitor of man with the names and destinies of each individual; and when it came to King David the prophet's turn, to whom was originally assigned a lifetime of only thirty years, Adam inquired, “How many years are appointed to me?”

“One thousand,” was the answer.*

“I will renounce seventy if thou wilt add them to the life of David!”

Allah consented; but, aware of Adam's forgetfulness, directed this grant to be recorded on a parchment, which Gabriel and Michael signed as witnesses.†

* Nine hundred and thirty years was the lifetime of Adam, according to Gen. v., 3.

† The Lord showed to Adam every future generation, with their heads, sages, and scribes. He saw that David was destined to live only three hours, and said, “Lord and Creator of the world, is this unalterably fixed?” The Lord answered:—

“It was my original design!”

“How many years shall I live?”

“One thousand.”

“Are grants known in heaven?”

“Certainly!”

“I grant, then, seventy years of my life to David!”

What did Adam therefore do? He gave a written grant, set his seal to it, and the same was done by the Lord and Metatron. — *Midrash Falkut*, p. 12.

Allah then cried to the assembled human family, "Confess that I am the only God, and that Mohammed is my Messenger." The hosts to the right made their confession immediately; but those to the left hesitated, some repeating but one-half of Allah's words, and others remaining entirely silent. And Allah continued, "The disobedient and impenitent shall suffer the pains of eternal fire, but the faithful shall be blessed in paradise!"

"So be it!" responded Adam; who shall call every man by name in the day of the resurrection, and pronounce his sentence according as the balance of justice shall decide.

When the covenant was concluded, Allah once more touched Adam's back, and the whole human race returned to him.

And when Allah was now about to withdraw his presence for the whole of this life from Adam, the latter uttered so loud a cry, that the whole earth shook to its foundations: the All-merciful thereupon extended his clemency, and said, "Follow yonder cloud; it shall lead thee to the place which lies directly opposite my heavenly throne; build me a temple there, and when thou walkest around it, I shall be as near to thee as to the angels which encompass my throne!"

Adam, who still retained his original stature, in a few hours made the journey from India to Mecca, where the cloud which had conducted him stood still. On Mount Arafa, near Mecca, he found, to his great joy, Eve, his wife, whence also this mountain (from Arafa, *to know, to recognise*) derives its name. They immediately began to build a temple with four gates, and they called the first gate the Gate of Adam; the second, the Gate of Abraham; the third, the Gate of Ismael; and the fourth, the Gate of Mohammed. The plan of the building they had received from the angel Gabriel, who had, at the same time, brought them a large diamond of exquisite brightness, which was afterward sullied by the sins of men, and at last became entirely black.

This black stone, the most sacred treasure of the blessed Kaaba, was originally the angel who guarded the forbidden tree, and was charged to warn Adam if he should approach it, but, having neglected his trust, he was changed into a jewel, and at the day of judgment he shall resume his pristine form and return to the holy angels.

Gabriel then instructed Adam in all the ceremonies of pilgrimage, precisely as they were instituted by Mohammed at a later period; nor was he permitted to behold Eve his wife until the evening of Thursday, when the holy days were ended.

On the following morning Adam returned with his wife to India, and abode there during the remainder of his life. But he went every year on a pilgrimage to Mecca, until he at last lost his original size, retaining a height of only sixty yards. This diminution of his stature, according

to the tradition of the learned, was caused by the excessive terror and grief which he experienced in consequence of the murder of Abel.

For Eve had borne him two sons, whom he named Kabil and Habil (Cain and Abel), and several daughters, whom he gave in marriage to their brothers. The fairest of them he intended for Abel, but Cain was displeased, and desired to obtain her, though he had a wife already. Adam referred the decision to Allah, and said to his sons, "Let each of you offer a sacrifice, and he to whom Allah vouchsafes a sign of acceptance shall marry her." Abel offered a fatted ram, and fire came down from heaven and consumed it; but Cain brought some fruits, which remained untouched upon the altar. He was thereupon filled with envy and hatred toward his brother, but knew not how he might destroy his life.*

One day Iblis placed himself in Cain's way as he walked with Abel in the field, and seizing a stone, shattered therewith the head of an approaching wolf; Cain followed his example, and with a large stone struck his brother's forehead till he fell lifeless to the ground. Iblis then assumed the shape of a raven, and, having killed another raven, dug a hole in the earth with his bill, and laying the dead one into it, covered it with the earth which he had dug up. Cain did the same with his brother, † so that Adam was long in ignorance of the fate of his son, and shrunk together through care and sorrow. It was not until he had fully learned what had befallen Abel that he resigned himself to the will of Allah, and was comforted.

Now the discovery of Abel's corpse took place in this wise: Since his expulsion from Eden, Adam had lived on wild herbs, fruits, and meat, when, at Allah's command, the angel Gabriel brought him the remaining grains of wheat which Eve had plucked, a yoke of oxen, the

*Cain and Abel divided the world between them, the one taking possession of the movable, and the other of the immovable property. Cain said to his brother, "The earth on which thou standest is mine; then betake thyself to the air"; but Abel replied, "The garments which thou wearest are mine; take them off!" There arose a conflict between them, which ended in Abel's death. R. Huna teaches, They contended for a twin sister of Abel: the latter claimed her because she was born with him, but Cain pleaded his right of primogeniture.—*Midrash*, p. 11.

† The dog which had watched Abel's flocks guarded also his corpse, protecting it against the beasts and birds of prey. Adam and Eve sat beside it, and wept, not knowing what to do. But a raven, whose friend had died, said, "I will go and teach Adam what he must do with his son." It dug a grave and laid the dead raven in it. When Adam saw this, he said to Eve, "Let us do the same with our child." The Lord rewarded the raven, and no one is allowed, therefore, to harm their young; they have food in abundance, and their cry for rain is always heard. R. Johanan teaches, Cain was not aware of the Lord's knowledge of hidden things; he therefore buried Abel, and replied to the Lord's inquiry, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" "Am I my brother's keeper?"—*Midrash*, p. 11.

various implements of husbandry, and instructed him in plowing, sowing, and reaping.

While he was one day working in the field, his plow suddenly stopped, nor were all the exertions of his cattle able to move it. Adam struck the oxen, and the eldest of them said to him:—

“Why dost thou strike me? Did Allah strike thee when thou wast disobedient?”

Adam prayed: “O Allah! after thou hast forgiven my sin, shall every beast of the field be permitted to reprove me?”

Allah heard him, and from that moment the brute creation lost the power of speech. Meanwhile, as the plow still remained immovable, Adam opened the ground, and found the still distinguishable remains of his son Abel.

At the time of harvest, Gabriel came again and instructed Eve in making bread. Adam then built an oven, and Gabriel brought fire from hell, but first washed it seventy times in the sea, otherwise it would have consumed the earth with all that it contained. When the bread was baked, he said to Adam:—

“This shall be thy and thy children’s chief nourishment.”

Although Adam had shed so many tears over the labor of the plow that they served instead of rain to moisten and to fructify the seed, yet were his descendants doomed to still greater toil by reason of their iniquities. Even in the days of (Enoch) Idris, the grain of wheat was no larger than a goose’s egg: in those of Elias it shrunk to the size of a hen’s egg: when the Jews attempted to kill Christ, it became like a pigeon’s egg; and, finally, under Uzier’s (Esdras’s) rule it took its present bulk.

When Adam and Eve were fully instructed in agricultural cookery, the angel Gabriel brought a lamb, and taught Adam to kill it in the name of Allah, to shear its wool, to strip its hide, and to tan it. Eve spun and wove under the angel’s direction, making a veil for herself, and a garment for Adam, and both Adam and Eve imparted the information which they had received from Gabriel to their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, in number forty, or, according to others, seventy thousand.

After the death of Abel and Cain, the latter of whom was slain by the blood-avenging angel, Eve gave birth to a third son, whom she called Sheth: he became the father of many sons and daughters, and is the ancestor of all prophets.

The nine hundred and thirtieth year of Adam’s life came at last to its close, and the Angel of Death appeared to him in the shape of an unsightly he-goat, and demanded his soul, while the earth opened under his feet, and demanded his body. Adam trembled with fear, and said

to the Angel of Death, "Allah has promised me a lifetime of a thousand years: thou hast come too soon." "Hast thou not granted seventy years of thy life to David?" replied the angel. Adam denied it, for he had indeed forgotten the circumstance; but the Angel of Death drew forth from his (Adam's) beard the parchment in which the grant was written, and spread it out before Adam, who, on seeing it, willingly gave up his soul.

His son Sheth washed and buried him, after that Gabriel, or, according to others, Allah himself, had pronounced a blessing. The same was done with Eve, who died in the following year.

In regard to the places of their burial, the learned differ. Some have named India; other traditions fix on Mount Kubeis, and even on Jerusalem. Allah alone is omniscient.

ENOCH, OR IDRIS

ENOCH, or Idris, was the son of Jarid, the son of Mahlalel, but was called Idris, from *darasa* (to study), for he was constantly occupied with the study of the holy books, both those which Allah had revealed to Adam, and those which Gabriel brought to him from heaven. He was so virtuous and pious, that Allah anointed him to be his prophet, and sent him as a preacher to the descendants of Cain, who employed only in deeds of sin the gigantic frames and surpassing strength with which Allah had endowed them. Enoch exhorted them unceasingly to purity of conduct, and was often compelled to draw his sword in defense of his life. He was the first who fought for Allah, the first who invented the balance to prevent deception in traffic, and the first also to sew garments, and to write with the *Kalam*. Enoch longed ardently for paradise; still he was not desirous of death, for he was anxious to do good on the earth; and but for his preaching and his sword, the sons of Cain would have flooded the earth with iniquity. Allah sent him the Angel of Death in the form of a beautiful virgin, in order to see whether he would approve himself worthy of the peculiar favor which no man before him had ever received.

"Come with me," said the disguised angel to Enoch, "and thou shalt do an acceptable work to Allah. My younger sister has been carried off by an ungodly descendant of Cain, who has confined her in the farthest regions of the West! Gird on thy sword, and help me to deliver her!"

Enoch girded on his sword, and took up his bow and the club, with which he had laid low at a single stroke whole ranks of the enemy, and

followed the virgin from morn till eve, through desolate and arid deserts, but he said not a word and looked not upon her. At nightfall she erected a tent, but Enoeh laid himself down at its entrance to sleep on the stony ground. On her inviting him to share her tent with her, he answered, "If thou hast anything to eat give it to me." She pointed to a sheep which was roving through the desert without a keeper, but he said, "I prefer hunger to theft; the sheep belongs to another."

Next day they continued their journey as before, Enoch still following the virgin and uttering no complaint, though he was nearly overcome with hunger and thirst. Toward evening they found a bottle of water on the ground. The virgin took it up, and opening it, would have forced Enoeh to drink, but he refused, and said, "Some luckless traveler has lost it, and will return to seek for it."

During the night, Enoch having once more baffled all the wiles of the virgin, who had again endeavored to draw him into her tent, Allah caused a spring of clear, fresh water to gush forth at his feet, and a date-tree to rise up laden with the choicest fruit. Enoch invited the virgin to eat and to drink, and concealed himself behind the tree, waiting her return to the tent; but when, after a long interval, she came not, he stepped to the door and said, "Who art thou, singular maiden? These two days thou hast been without nourishment, and art even now unwilling to break thy fast, though Allah himself has miraculously supplied us with meat and drink; and yet thou art fresh and blooming like the dewy rose in spring, and thy form is full and rounded like the moon in her fifteenth night."

"I am the Angel of Death," she replied, "sent by Allah to prove thee. Thou hast conquered; ask now, and he will assuredly fulfill all thy wishes."

"If thou art the Angel of Death, take my soul."

"Death is bitter: wherefore desirest thou to die?"

"I will pray to Allah to animate me once more, that after the terrors of the grave, I may serve him with greater zeal."

"Wilt thou, then, die twice? Thy time has not yet come: but pray thou to Allah, and I shall execute his will."

Enoch prayed:—

"Lord permit the Angel of Death to let me taste death, but recall me soon to life! Art thou not almighty and merciful?"

The Angel of Death was commanded to take the soul of Enoeh, but at the same moment to restore it to him. On his return to life, Enoeh requested the angel to show him hell, that he might be in a position to describe it to sinners with all its terrors. The angel led him to Malik, its keeper, who seized him, and was in the act of flinging him into the abyss, when a voice from heaven exclaimed:—

“Malik, beware! Harm not my prophet Idris, but show him the terrors of thy kingdom.”

He then placed him on the wall which separates hell from the place appointed as the abode of those who have merited neither hell nor heaven. Thence he saw every variety of scorpions and other venomous reptiles, and vast flames of fire, monstrous caldrons of boiling water, trees with prickly fruits, rivers of blood and putrefaction, red-hot chains, garments of pitch, and so many other objects prepared for the torture of sinners, that he besought Malik to spare him their further inspection, and to consign him once more to the Angel of Death.

Enoch now prayed the latter to show him paradise also. The angel conducted him to the gate before which Ridwhan kept his watch. But the guardian would not suffer him to enter: then Allah commanded the tree Tuba, which is planted in the midst of the garden, and is known to be, after Sirdrat Almontaha, the most beautiful and tallest tree of paradise, to bend its branches over the wall. Enoch seized hold of them, and was drawn in unobserved by Ridwhan. The Angel of Death attempted to prevent it, but Allah said, “Wilt thou slay him twice?” Thus it came to pass that Enoch was taken alive into paradise, and was permitted by the most gracious One to remain there in spite of the Angel of Death and of Ridwhan.*

NOAH, HUD, AND SALIH

AFTER the translation of Enoch, the depravity of men waxed so mightily, that Allah determined to destroy them by a flood. But the prophet Noah, who had in vain attempted to restore his followers to the path of virtue, was saved: for Allah commanded him to build an ark for himself and his family, and to enter it as soon as his wife should see the scalding waters streaming from the oven.† This was the beginning of the flood; for it was followed by incessant rains from heaven (as from well-filled leathern bottles into which a sharp instrument had been plunged), which, mingling with the subterraneous waters that issued forth from all the veins of the earth, produced an inundation which none save the giant Audj, the son of Anak, survived.‡ The ark floated during

* In the Bible it is said the Lord took Enoch; but the “Midrash” adds, nine human beings entered paradise alive: Enoch, Messiah, Elias, Eliezer the servant of Abraham, the servant of the king of Kush, Chiram the king of Tyre, Jaabez the son of the Prince and Rabbi Juda, Serach the daughter of Asher, and Bitje the daughter of Pharaoh.

† The generation of the flood was chastised with scalding water.—*Midrash*, p. 14.

‡ Besides Noah, Og the king of Bashan was saved, for he seized hold on one of the beams of the ark, and swore to Noah that he and his posterity would serve him

forty days from one end of the earth to the other, passing over the highest mountains; but when it came to Mount Abu Kubeis, on whose peak Allah had concealed the black diamond of the Kaaba, that it might serve in the second building of this blessed temple, it rode seven times round the sacred spot. At the lapse of six months the ark rested on Mount Djudi in Mesopotamia, and Noah left it as soon as the dove which he had sent to examine the state of the earth returned with an olive leaf in its mouth. Noah blessed the dove, and Allah gave her a necklace of green feathers; but the raven which Noah had sent out before the dove, he cursed, because, instead of returning to him, it stayed to feast on a carcass which it found on the earth,* wherefore the raven is no longer able to walk like other birds.

But, spite of the calamities of the flood, which Allah intended to serve forever as a warning against sin, Iblis soon succeeded in banishing virtue and goodness from the human family as before. Even Noah's sons, Cham and Japhet, forgot the reverence that was due to their father, and left him uncovered when one day they found him asleep. Cham even derided him, and became on this account the father of all the black races of mankind. Japhet's descendants remained white, indeed, but it was written that none of them should attain to the dignity of a prophet. Sham (Shem) is the sole ancestor of the prophets, among whom Hud and Salih, who lived immediately after the flood, attained to high distinction. † Hud was sent to the nation of giants which dwelt in Edom, a province of the southern Arabia, then governed by King Shaddad, the son of Aad. When the prophet exhorted this king to the faith and fear of Allah, he inquired, "What shall be the reward of my obedience?" "My Lord," replied the prophet, "will give thee in the life to come, gardens of eternal verdure, and palaces of gold and jewels." But the king answered, "I stand not in need of thy promises, for I can even in this world build me gardens and pleasure-houses of gold, and costly pearls, and jewels." He then built Irem, and called it the City of Columns, for each of its palaces rested on a thousand columns of rubies and emeralds, and each column was a hundred cubits high. He next constructed canals, and planted gardens teeming with the finest fruit-trees and the fairest flowers.

as bondmen. Noah made an opening through the wall of the ark, and gave Og some food daily, for it is written, "Only Og the king of Bashan survived of all the giants."—*Midrash*, p. 14.

* The "Midrash" p. 15, relates the same, and draws from it the conclusion that no one should seek to accomplish his ends by (unclean) unlawful means: the raven being unclean (unlawful) but the dove being clean.

† Hud is probably the Eber of the Scriptures, whom the Rabbis esteem as a prophet, and the founder of a celebrated school of divinity.

When all was completed with prodigal magnificence, Shaddad said, "I am now in actual possession of all that Hud has promised me for the life to come." But when he would have made his entrance into the city, Allah concealed it from him and his followers, nor has it since been seen by man, save once in the reign of Maccavia.

The king and his people then wandered through the wilderness in rain and tempest, and at last sought shelter in caves. But Allah caused them to fall in, and only Hud escaped.

The destruction of this tribe induced their kinsmen, the Thamudites, who numbered seventy thousand warriors, to choose the regions between Syria and Hedjaz as their abode, for they also feared to be destroyed, and hoped to secure themselves against the wrath of Allah by building their houses in the rocks. Djundu Eben Omer, the king of the Thamudites, built him a palace there, whose splendor had never been equaled on earth, and the high-priest Kanuch erected a similar one for himself. But their most costly and most perfect building was the temple. In it there stood an idol of the finest gold, and adorned with precious stones: it had a human face, a lion's figure, a bull's neck, and a horse's feet. One day when Kanuch, after his prayers, had fallen asleep in the temple, he heard a voice which said, "Truth shall appear, and delusion shall vanish." He sprang to his feet in terror, and rushed toward the idol, but lo! it was lying on the ground, and beside it lay the crown which had fallen from its head. Kanuch cried for help; the king and his viziers hastened to the spot, restored the idol to its place, and replaced the crown on its head. But the occurrence made a deep impression on the high-priest's mind. His faith in the idol failed, and his zeal to serve it cooled. The king soon discovered the change that had passed within him, and one day sent both his viziers to apprehend and to examine him. But scarcely had his messengers left the royal palace when they were struck blind, and were unable to find Kanuch's dwelling. Meanwhile, Allah sent two angels, who carried the high-priest to a distant valley unknown to his tribe, where a shady grotto, supplied with every convenience of life, was prepared for him. Here he lived peaceably in the service of the one God, and secure against the persecutions of Djundu, who in vain sent out messengers in every direction to discover him. The king gave up, at length, all hope of his capture, and appointed his own cousin, Davud, as high-priest in Kanuch's stead. But on the third day after his inauguration, Davud came to the king in haste, and reported that the idol had again fallen from its place. The king once more restored it, and Iblis cried from the idol, "Be steadfast in my worship, and resist all the temptations into which some innovators would lead you." On the following feast-day, when Davud was about to offer two fat bulls to the idol, they said

to him, with a human voice, "Why will you offer us, whom Allah has endued with life, as a sacrifice to a dead mass of gold, which your own hands have dug from the earth, though Allah has created it? Destroy, O Allah, so sinful a people!" At these words the bulls fled, nor were the swiftest riders of the king able to overtake them. Yet it pleased Allah, in his wisdom and long suffering, to spare the Thamudites still longer, and to send to them a prophet who should labor by many wonders to convince them of the truth.

Ragwha, the wife of Kanuch, had not ceased to mourn since the flight of her husband; yet in the third year, Allah sent to her a bird from paradise, to conduct her to his grotto. This bird was a raven, but its head was as white as snow, its back was of emerald, its feet were of crimson, its beak was like the clearest sunbeam, and its eyes shone like diamonds, only its breast was black, for the curse of Noah, which made all ravens entirely black, had not fallen on this sacred bird. It was the hour of midnight when it stepped into Ragwha's dark chamber, where she lay weeping on a carpet, but the glance of its eyes lit up the chamber as if the sun had suddenly risen therein. She rose from her couch, and gazed with wonder on the beautiful bird, which opened its mouth and said, "Rise and follow me, for Allah has pitied thy tears, and will unite thee to thy husband." She rose and followed the raven, which flew before her, changing the night into day by the light of its eyes, and the morning star had not yet risen when she arrived at the grotto. The raven now cried, "Kanuch, arise, and admit thy wife," and then vanished.

Within a year after their reunion she gave birth to a son, who was the very image of Seth, and the light of prophecy shone on his brow. His father called him Salih (the pious), for he trusted to bring him up in the faith of the one only God, and in piety of life; but soon after Salih's birth Kanuch died, and the raven from paradise came again to the grotto to take back Ragwha and her son to the city of Djundu, where Salih grew rapidly in mind and body, to the admiration of his mother, and of all who came to visit them; and at the age of eighteen he was the most powerful and handsome, as well as the most gifted youth of his time.

It then came to pass that the descendants of Ham undertook an expedition against the Thamudites, and were to all appearance on the point of destroying them. Their best warriors had already fallen, and the rest were preparing for flight, when Salih suddenly appeared on the battle-field at the head of a few of his friends, and by his personal valor and excellent maneuvers wrested the victory from the enemy, and routed them completely. This achievement secured to him the love and gratitude of the more virtuous part of his tribe, but the king envied him

from this day, and sought after his life. Yet, as often as the assassins came to Salih's dwelling to slay him by the king's command, their hands were paralyzed, and were restored only by Salih's intercession with Allah. In this wise, the believers in Salih and his invisible God gradually increased, so that there was soon formed a community of forty men, who built a mosque, in which they worshiped in common.

One day the king surrounded the mosque with his soldiers, and threatened Salih and his adherents with death unless Allah should save them by a special miracle. Salih prayed, and the leaves of the date-tree that grew before the mosque were instantly changed to scorpions and adders, which fell upon the king and his men, while two doves which dwelt on the roof of the mosque exclaimed, "Believe in Salih, for he is the prophet and messenger of Allah." To this twofold wonder a second and third one were added, for at Salih's prayer the tree resumed its former shape, and some of the Thamudites who had been killed by the serpents returned to life again.

But the king continued in unbelief, for Iblis spoke from the mouth of the idol, calling Salih a magician and a demon.

The tribe was then visited by famine, but this also failed to convert them. When Salih beheld the stubbornness of the Thamudites, he prayed to Allah to destroy so sinful a people.

But he, too, like his father, was carried by an angel to a subterraneous cave in sleep, and slept there twenty years. On waking, he was about to go into the mosque to perform his morning devotions, for he imagined that he had slept only one night; but the mosque lay in ruins; he then went to see his friends and followers, but some of them were dead; others, in the idea that he had abandoned them or been secretly slain, had gone to other countries, or returned to idolatry. Salih knew not what to do. Then appeared to him the angel Gabriel, and said, "Because thou hast hastily condemned thy people, Allah has taken from thee twenty years of thy life; and thou hast passed them sleeping in the cave. But rise and preach again. Allah sends thee here Adam's shirt, Abel's sandals, the tunic of Sheth, the seal of Idris, the sword of Noah, and the staff of Hud, with all of which thou shalt perform many wonders to confirm my words." On the following day, the king, and priests, and heads of the people, attended by many citizens, went in procession to a neighboring chapel, in which an idol, similar to that of the temple, was worshiped. Salih stepped between the king and the door of the chapel; and when the king asked him who he was — for Salih's appearance had so changed during the twenty years which he had spent in the cavern that the king did not recognize him — he answered, "I am Salih, the messenger of the one only God, who, twenty years ago, preached to thee, and showed thee many clear proofs of the truth of my mission. But since

thou, as I perceive, still persistest in idolatry, I once more appear before thee in the name of the Lord, and by his permission offer to perform before thine eyes any miracle thou mayest desire in testimony of my prophetic calling."

The king took counsel with Shihab, his brother, and Davud his high-priest, who stood near him. Then said the latter, "If he be the messenger of Allah, let a camel come forth from this rocky mountain, one hundred cubits high, with all imaginable colors united on its back, with eyes flaming like lightning, with a voice like thunder, and with feet swifter than the wind." When Salih declared his readiness to produce such a camel, Davud added, "Its fore legs must be of gold, and its hind legs of silver, its head of emerald, and its ears of rubies, and its back must bear a silken tent, supported on four diamond pillars inlaid with gold." Salih was not deterred by all these additional requirements; and the king added, "Hear, O Salih! if thou be the prophet of Allah, let this mountain be cleft open, and a camel step forth with skin, hair, flesh, blood, bones, muscles, and veins, like other camels, only much larger, and let it immediately give birth to a young camel, which shall follow it everywhere as a child follows its mother, and when scarcely produced, exclaim, 'There is but one Allah, and Salih is his messenger and prophet.'"

"And will you turn to Allah if I pray to him, and if he perform such a miracle before your eyes?"

"Assuredly!" replied Davud. "Yet must this camel yield its milk spontaneously, and the milk must be cold in summer and warm in winter."

"Are these all your conditions?" asked Salih.

"Still farther," continued Shihab; "the milk must heal all diseases, and enrich all the poor; and the camel must go alone to every house, calling the inmates by name, and filling all their empty vessels with its milk."

"Thy will be done!" replied Salih. "Yet I must also stipulate that no one shall harm the camel, or drive it from its pasture, or ride on it, or use it for any labor."

On their swearing to him to treat the camel as a holy thing, Salih prayed: "O God! who hast created Adam out of the earth, and formed Eve from a rib, and to whom the hardest things are easy, let these rocks bring forth a camel, such as their king has described, for the conversion of the Thamudites."

Scarcely had Salih concluded his prayer, when the earth opened at his feet, and there gushed forth a fountain of fresh water fragrant with musk: the tent which had been erected for Adam in paradise descended from heaven, and thereupon the rocky wall which supported the eastern

side of the temple groaned like a woman in travail; a flight of birds descended, and filling their beaks with the water of the fountain, sprinkled it over the rock, and lo! there was seen the head of the camel, which was gradually followed by the rest of its body; when it stood upon the earth, it was exactly as it had been described by the king, and it cried out immediately, "There is no God but Allah; Salih is his messenger and prophet." The angel Gabriel then came down and touched the camel with his flaming sword, and it gave birth to a young camel which resembled it entirely, and repeated the confession that had been required. The camel then went to the dwellings of the people, calling them by name, and filling every empty vessel with its milk. On its way all animals bowed before it, and all the trees bent their branches to it in reverence.

The king could no longer shut his heart to such proofs of God's almightiness and Salih's mission: he fell on the prophet's neck, kissed him, and said, "I confess there is but one God, and that thou art his messenger!"

But the brother of the king, as well as Davud and all the priesthood, called it only sorcery and delusion, and invented all kinds of calumnies and falsehoods to retain the people in unbelief and idolatry. Meanwhile, since the camel, by constantly yielding its milk and praising Allah as often as it went down to the water, made daily new converts, the chiefs of the infidels resolved to kill it. But when many days had passed before they ventured to approach it, Shihab issued a proclamation, that whosoever should kill the mountain camel should have his daughter Ranjan to wife. Kadbar, a young man who had long loved this maiden, distinguished as she was for grace and beauty, but without daring to woo her, being only a man of the people, armed himself with a huge sword, and, attended by Davud and some other priests, fell upon the camel from behind while it was descending to the waters, and wounded it in its hoof.

At that moment all nature uttered a frightful shriek of woe. The little camel ran moaning to the highest pinnacle of the mountain, and cried, "May the curse of Allah light upon thee, thou sinful people!" Salih and the king, who had not quitted him since his conversion, went into the city, demanding the punishment of Kadbar and his accomplices. But Shihab, who had in the meantime usurped the throne, threatened them with instant death. Salih, flying, had only time to say that Allah would wait their repentance only three days longer, and on the expiration of the third day would annihilate them like their brethren the Aadites. His threat was fulfilled, for they were irreclaimable. Already on the next day the people grew as yellow as the seared leaves of autumn; and wherever the wounded camel trod, there issued fountains of blood from

the earth. On the second day their faces became red as blood; but on the third day they turned black as coal, and on the same day, toward nightfall, they saw the camel hovering in the air on crimson wings, whereupon some of the angels hurled down whole mountains of fire, while others opened the subterraneous vaults of fire which are connected with hell, so that the earth vomited forth firebrands in the shape of camels. At sunset, all the Thamudites were a heap of ashes. Only Salih and King Djundu escaped, and wandered in company to Palestine, where they ended their days as hermits.

ABRAHAM

SOON after the death of Salih, the prophet Abraham was born at Susa, or, according to others, at Babylon. He was a contemporary of the mighty king, Nimrod, and his birth falls into the year 1081 after the Flood, which happened in 2242 from the Fall. He was welcomed at his birth by the angel Gabriel, who immediately wrapped him in a white robe. Nimrod, on the night in which Abraham was born—it was between the night of Thursday and Friday morning—heard a voice in his dream which cried aloud, “Woe to them that shall not confess the God of Abraham: the truth has come to light, delusion vanishes!” He also dreamed that the idol which he worshiped had fallen down; and convened, therefore, on the following morning, all his priests and sorcerers, communicating to them his dream. Yet no one knew how to interpret it, or to give any account of Abraham. Nimrod had already once in a dream seen a star which eclipsed the light of the sun and moon, and had, therefore, been warned by his sorcerers of a boy who threatened to deprive him of his throne, and to annihilate the people’s faith in him; for Nimrod caused himself to be worshiped as God. Yet, seeing that since that dream he had commanded every newborn male to be slain at its birth, he did not think there was any need for further apprehension. Abraham alone, by a miracle of heaven, was saved of the children who were born at that time.

In a cave Abraham remained concealed during fifteen months, and his mother visited him sometimes to nurse him. But he had no need of her food, for Allah commanded water to flow from one of Abraham’s fingers, milk from another, honey from the third, the juice of dates from the fourth, and butter from the fifth. On stepping, for the first time, beyond the cave, and seeing a beautiful star, Abraham said, “This is my God, which has given me meat and drink in the cave.” Yet anon the moon rose in full splendor, exceeding the light of the star, and he said, “This is not God; I will worship the moon.” But when, toward

morning, the moon waxed more and more pale, and the sun rose, he acknowledged the latter as a divinity, until he also disappeared from the horizon. He then asked his mother, "Who is my God?" and she replied:—

"It is I."

"And who is thy God?" he inquired further.

"Thy father."

"And who is my father's God?"

"Nimrod!"

"And Nimrod's God?"

She then struck him on the face, and said, "Be silent!" He was silent, but thought within himself, "I acknowledge no other God than Him who has created heaven and earth, and all that is in them." When he was a little older, his father, Aser, who was a maker of idols, sent him out to sell them; but Abraham cried, "Who will buy what can only do him harm, and bring no good?" so that no one bought of him. One day, when all his townsmen had gone on a pilgrimage to some idol, he feigned sickness, and, remaining alone at home, destroyed two-and-seventy idols, which were set up in the temple. It was then that he obtained the honorable surname of Chalil Allah (the friend of God). But on the return of the pilgrims he was arrested, and brought before Nimrod; for suspicion soon rested upon him, both on account of his stay at home, and the contemptuous reflections on the worship of idols in which he was known to indulge. Nimrod condemned him to be burned alive as a blasphemer. The people of Babel then collected wood for a pile during a whole month, or, according to some of the learned, during forty days, and at that time knew of no more God-pleasing work than this: so that if any one was sick, or desired to obtain any favor from his gods, he vowed to carry a certain quantity of wood upon his recovery, or on the fulfilment of his wish. The women were especially active; they washed, or did other manual work, for hire, and bought wood with their earnings. When at last the pile had attained a height of thirty cubits and a breadth of twenty, Nimrod commanded it to be set on fire. Then there mounted on high such a mighty flame, that many birds in the air were consumed by it; the smoke which arose darkened the whole city, and the crackling of the wood was heard at the distance of a day's journey. Then Nimrod summoned Abraham, and asked him again, "Who is thy God?"

"He that has power to kill and to make alive again," Abraham replied. He thereupon conjured up a man from the grave who had died many years ago, and commanded him to bring a white cock, a black raven, a green pigeon, and a speckled peacock. When he had brought these birds, Abraham cut them into a thousand pieces, and flung them

in four different directions, retaining only the four heads in his hands. Over these he said a prayer, then called each bird by name, and behold, the little pieces came flying toward him, and, combining as they had been, united themselves to their heads. The birds lived as before, but he who had been raised from the dead at Abraham's command, descended again into the grave.

Nimrod then caused two malefactors to be brought from prison, and commanded one of them to be executed, but pardoned the other, saying, "I also am God, for I too have the disposal of life and death." However childish this remark was—for he had the power only of remitting the sentence of a living man, not of restoring the dead to life—Abraham did not object, but, in order to silence him at once, said, "Allah causes the sun to rise in the east; if thou be Allah, let it for once rise in the west." But, instead of replying, Nimrod commanded his servants to fling Abraham into the fire, by means of an engine which Satan himself had suggested to him.

At the same instant, the heaven with all its angels, and the earth with all its creatures, cried as with one voice, "God of Abraham! thy friend, who alone worships thee on earth, is being thrown into the fire: permit us to rescue him." The angel that presideth over the reservoirs was about to extinguish the flames by a deluge from on high, and he that keepeth the winds to scatter them by a tempest to all parts of the world; but Allah, blessed be his name! said, "I permit every one of you to whom Abraham shall cry for protection to assist him; yet if he turn only to me, then let me by my own immediate aid rescue him from death."* Then cried Abraham from the midst of the pile, "There is no God besides thee; thou art supreme, and unto thee alone belong praise and glory!" The flame had already consumed his robe, when the angel Gabriel stepped before him and asked, "Hast thou need of me?"

But he replied, "The help of Allah alone is what I need!"

"Pray, then, to him, that he may save thee!" rejoined Gabriel.

"He knows my condition," answered Abraham.

All the creatures of the earth now attempted to quench the fire: the lizard alone blew upon it, and, as a punishment, became dumb from that hour.

At Allah's command Gabriel now cried to the fire, "Become cool, and do Abraham no harm!" To these last words Abraham was indebted for his escape; for at the sound of Gabriel's voice it grew so chill around him that he was well-nigh freezing, and the cold had therefore to

* The "Midrash," p. 20, says, "When the wicked Nimrod cast Abraham into the furnace, Gabriel said, 'Lord of the world, suffer me to save this saint from the fire!' but the Lord replied, 'I am the only one supreme in my world, and he is supreme in his; it is meet, therefore, that the supreme should save the supreme.'"

be diminished again. The fire then remained as it was, burning on as before, but it had miraculously lost all its warmth; and this was not only so with Abraham's pile, but with all fires lighted on that day throughout the whole world.

Allah then caused a fountain of fresh water to spring up in the midst of the fire, and roses and other flowers to rise out of the earth at the spot where Abraham was lying. He likewise sent him a silken robe from paradise, and an angel in human shape, who kept him company during seven days; for so long he remained in the fire. These seven days Abraham, in later times, frequently called the most precious of his life.

His miraculous preservation in the pile became the cause of his marriage with Radha, the daughter of Nimrod; for on the seventh day after Abraham was cast into the fire, she prayed to her father for permission to see him. Nimrod endeavored to dissuade her from it, and said, "What canst thou see of him? He has long ere now been changed into ashes." Yet she ceased not to entreat him, until he suffered her to go near the pile. There she beheld Abraham, through the fire, sitting, quite comfortable, in the midst of a blooming garden. Amazed, she called out, "O Abraham, does not the fire consume thee?" He replied, "Whoever keeps Allah in his heart, and the words, 'In the name of Allah, the All-merciful,' on his tongue, over him has fire no power."

Whereupon she begged his permission to approach him; but he said, "Confess that there is but one only God, who has chosen me to be his messenger!" As soon as she had made this confession of her faith, the flames parted before her, so that she was able to reach Abraham unharmed. But when she returned to her father, and told him in what condition she had found the prophet, and sought to convert him to his faith, he tormented and tortured her so cruelly, that Allah commanded an angel to deliver her from his hands, and to conduct her to Abraham, who had meanwhile left the city of Babel.

Still Nimrod was far from being reclaimed; he even resolved to build a lofty tower, wherewith, if possible, to scale the heavens, and to search therein for the God of Abraham. The tower rose to a height of five thousand cubits; but as heaven was still far off, and the workmen were unable to proceed farther with the building, Nimrod caught two eagles and kept them upon the tower, feeding them constantly with flesh. He then left them to fast for several days, and when they were ravenous with hunger, he fastened to their feet a light, closed palanquin, with one window above and another below, and seated himself in it with one of his huntsmen. The latter took a long spear, to which a bit of flesh was attached, and thrust it through the upper window, so that the famishing eagles flew instantly upward, bearing

the palanquin aloft. When they had flown toward heaven during a whole day, Nimrod heard a voice, which cried to him, "Godless man, whither goest thou?" Nimrod seized the bow of his huntsman, and discharged an arrow, which forthwith fell back through the window stained with blood, and this abandoned man believed that he had wounded the God of Abraham.

But as he was now so far from the earth that it appeared to him no larger than an egg, he ordered the spear to be held downward, and the eagles and the palanquin descended.

Respecting the blood which was seen on Nimrod's arrow, the learned are not agreed as to whence it came: many contend it was the blood of a fish which the clouds had carried with them from the sea, and adduce this circumstance as the reason why fish need not be slaughtered.* Others suppose that Nimrod's arrow had struck a bird which was flying still higher than the eagles. When Nimrod, in the swell of triumph, once more reached the pinnacle of his tower, Allah caused it to fall in with such frightful noise, that all the people were beside themselves from terror, and every one spoke in a different tongue. Since that period the languages of men vary, and, on account of the confusion arising from this circumstance, the capital of Nimrod was called Babel (the confusion).

As soon, however, as Nimrod had recovered himself, he pursued Abraham with an army which covered the space of twelve square miles. Allah then sent Gabriel unto Abraham to ask him by what creature he should send him deliverance? Abraham chose the fly; and Allah said, "Verily, if he had not chosen the fly, an insect would have come to his aid, seventy of which are lighter than the wing of a fly."

The exalted Allah then summoned the king of flies, and commanded him to march with his host against Nimrod. He then collected all the flies and gnats of the whole earth, and with them attacked Nimrod's men with such violence, that they were soon obliged to take to flight, for they consumed their skin, and bones, and flesh, and picked the eyes out of their heads. Nimrod himself fled, and locked himself up in a thickly-walled tower; but one of the flies rushed in with him, and flew round his face during seven days, without his being able to catch it, the fly returning again and again to his lip, and sucking it so long that it began to swell. It then flew up into his nose, and the more he endeavored to get it out, the more deeply it pressed into it, until it came to the brain, which it began to devour. Then there remained no other means of relief to him than to run his head against the wall, or to have some one

*The laws of the Mohammedans, and of the Jews especially, regulate scrupulously the mode in which clean animals are to be slain; what part is to receive the mortal wound; how it is to be inflicted; the knife to be used; and the formula of prayer to be uttered. But no such laws exist in regard to fish.

strike his forehead with a hammer. But the fly grew continually larger until the fortieth day, when his head burst open, and the insect, which had grown to the size of a pigeon, flew out, and said to the dying Nimrod, who even now would not come to repentance, "Thus does Allah, whenever he pleases, permit the feeblest of his creatures to destroy the man who will not believe in him and in his messenger." The tower in which Nimrod was, then tumbled in upon him, and he must roll about under its ruins until the day of the resurrection.

After Nimrod's death, many persons, whom the fear of the king had prevented, turned to the only God, and to Abraham, his messenger. The first were his nephew, Lot, the son of Haran, and Lot's sister, Sarah, whom Abraham afterward married. She bore a perfect resemblance to her mother Eve, to whom Allah had given two-thirds of all beauty, while the whole human race have to be satisfied with the remaining third, and even of this quota Joseph alone obtained one-third.



Sarah was so beautiful that Abraham, who, in order to proclaim the true faith was obliged to make many journeys to Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and Arabia, found it necessary to carry her with him in a chest. One day he was arrested on the banks of the Jordan by a publican, to whom he was obliged to give tithe of all he carried with him. Abraham opened all his chests but the one in which Sarah was confined; and when the publican proceeded to search it, too, Abraham said, "Suppose it be filled with silks, and let me pay the tithe accordingly." But the officer commanded him to open it. Abraham begged him again to pass it unopened, and offered to give tithe as if it were filled with gold and jewels. Still the other insisted on his seeing the contents of the chest; and, when he beheld Sarah, he was so dazzled by her beauty, that he ran forthwith to the king, reporting what had happened.

The king immediately summoned Abraham and inquired of him, "Who is the maiden whom thou carriest with thee?" Abraham, from fear of being put to death if he avowed the truth, replied, "She is my sister!" At the same time he told no falsehood, for in his mind he meant, "She is my sister in the faith." When the king heard this, he took her with him to his palace. Abraham stood full of despair before it, not knowing what to do, when Allah caused the walls of the palace to become transparent as glass, and Abraham saw how the king, as soon as he had seated himself with Sarah on a divan, desired to embrace her. But at that instant his hand withered, the palace began to shake, and threatened to fall. The king fell on the ground from dread and fright, and Sarah said to him, "Let me go, for I am the wife of Abraham."

Pharaoh thereupon summoned Abraham, and reproached him for his untruth. The latter then prayed for him, and Allah healed the king, who now gave Abraham many rich presents, and among others, an Egyptian slave by the name of Hagar.* She bore him a son, whom he called Ismael. But as Sarah was barren, and the more jealous since the light of Mohammed already shone on Ismael's forehead, she demanded of Abraham to put away Hagar and her son. He was undecided, until commanded by Allah to obey Sarah in all things. Yet he entreated her again not to cast off her bondmaid and her son. But this so exasperated her, that she declared she would not rest until her hands had been imbued in Hagar's blood. Then Abraham pierced Hagar's ear quickly, and drew a ring through it, so that Sarah was able to dip her hand in the blood of Hagar without bringing the latter into danger.

From that time it became a custom among women to wear earrings.

Sarah now suffered Hagar to remain yet a few years longer with her; but when she had borne Isaac, and observed that Abraham loved him less than Ismael, her jealousy awoke afresh, and she now insisted on Hagar's removal. Abraham then went with her and Ismael on his way, and the angel Gabriel guided them into the Arabian desert, to the place where afterward the holy temple of Mecca was built. This place had been dedicated to the worship of Allah even before Adam's birth.† For when Allah made known to the angels his resolve of creating man, and they said, "Wilt thou fill the earth with sinful creatures?" Allah was so wroth at their dissuasion, that the angels, to reconcile Him, walked, singing praises, seven times round His throne. Allah pardoned them, but said, "Build me forthwith, in a direct line downward to the earth, a temple, which the sinners may one day encompass, that they also may obtain mercy, even as ye have now encircled my throne, and been forgiven." Allah afterward gave to Adam a diamond of paradise, which is now called the black stone; for it afterward grew black by the unclean touch of the heathen, but will one day rise with eyes and a tongue, to bear testimony to those who have touched it in their pilgrimage.‡ This jewel was originally an angel, appointed to watch over Adam,

* The "Midrash," fol. 21, says that Hagar was given as a slave to Abraham by her father Pharaoh, who said, "My daughter had better be a slave in the house of Abraham than mistress in any other." Elimelech, in like manner, and for the same reason, gave his daughter as a bondmaid to Abraham, after he had seen the wonders which were done for Sarah's sake.

† The sanctity which the Moslem attaches to *places* is akin to the feeling in the church of the Pharisees before Christ, and of Rome at present. But the Savior reproves it by these words, "*Wherever* two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."—*Matt.* xviii., 20.

‡ The black stone of the Kaaba is to this day an object of great veneration with the Mussulmans, and every pilgrim visiting the temple kisses it repeatedly.

that he might not eat of the forbidden tree; but, on account of his neglect, was changed into a stone. At the time of the flood, Allah lifted up this temple into heaven; yet the winds blew Noah's ark seven times round the spot where it had stood.

After having accompanied Hagar and Ismael unto Mecca, Abraham returned again to Sarah, in Syria, leaving the former, at Gabriel's command, to themselves, provided with a few

dates and a bottle of water. But these provisions were soon exhausted, and the whole region was waste, arid, and uninhabited. When Hagar and Ismael were suffering from hunger and thirst, the former ran seven times from Mount Susa to Marwa,* calling upon Allah for relief: the angel Gabriel then appeared to her, and stamped upon the earth with his foot, and behold, there started up a fountain, which is still known as the fountain of Semsem.† But at that time its waters were as sweet as honey and as nutritious as milk, so that Hagar was un-



willing again to leave these regions.

After some time there came two Amalekites to her, who were seeking a camel which had strayed there, and, finding good water, they informed their tribe thereof, which had encamped a few hours westward. They settled with her, and Ismael grew up among them; but Abraham visited him every month, riding on Barak, his miraculous horse, which carried him in half a day from Syria to Mecca.

When Ismael had attained the age of thirteen years, Abraham heard a voice in his dream, which cried, "Sacrifice Ismael, thy son."

The Jews, and even many Mussulmans, do indeed maintain that it was his son Isaac whom Abraham offered; but the true believers reject this opinion, inasmuch as Mohammed called himself the son of two men who had been set apart as sacrifices, meaning thereby Ismael and his own father, Abd Allah, whom his grandfather, Abdul Mattalib, intended to offer in fulfillment of a vow, but, by the decision of a priestess, redeemed with a hundred camels.

* The pilgrims to Mecca still run seven times from Mount Susa to Marwa, frequently looking round and stooping down, to imitate Hagar when seeking for water.

† This fountain is within the Kaaba: its water is brackish, though somewhat less so than the other water of Mecca.

When Abraham awoke, he was in doubt whether he should regard his dream as a Divine command or as the instigation of Satan. But, when the same dream was yet twice repeated, he dared not to hesitate any longer, and therefore took a knife and a rope, and said to Ismael, "Follow me!"

When Iblis saw this, he thought within himself, "An act so well pleasing to Allah I must seek to prevent," and he assumed the form of a man, and, going to Hagar, said to her, "Knowest thou whither Abraham has gone with thy son?" Hagar answered, "He has gone into the forest to cut wood."

"It is false," replied Iblis; "he intends to slaughter thy son."

"How is this possible?" rejoined Hagar; "does he not love him as much as I?"

"Yea," continued Iblis, "but he believes that Allah has commanded it."

"If it be so," rejoined Hagar, "let him do what he believes pleasing to Allah."

When Iblis could effect nothing with Hagar, he betook himself to Ismael, and said, "Knowest thou for what end this wood which thou hast gathered is to serve?"

Ismael replied, "It is for our use at home."

"No!" rejoined Iblis; "thy father designs to offer thee as a sacrifice, because he dreamed that Allah had commanded him."

"Well," replied Ismael, "if it be so, let him fulfill on me the will of Allah."

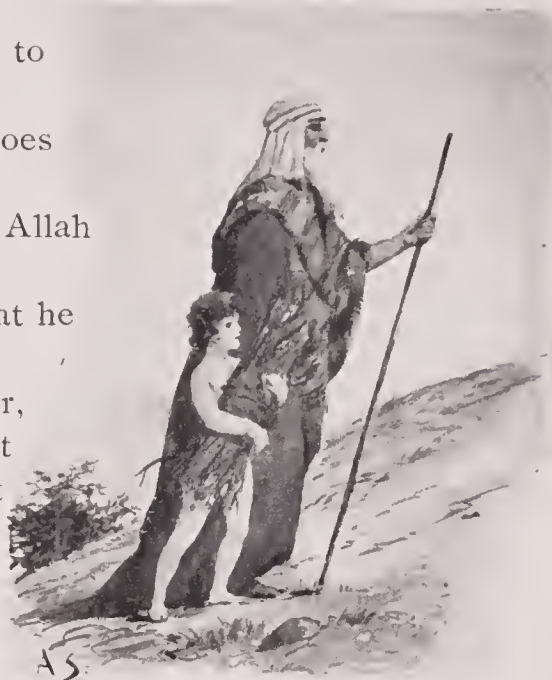
Iblis then turned to Abraham himself, and said, "Sheik, whither goest thou?"

"To cut wood."

"For what purpose?"

Abraham was silent; but Iblis continued, "I know thou designed to offer up thy son, because Iblis has suggested it to thee in a dream;" but at these words Abraham recognized Iblis, and flinging at him seven pebbles, a ceremony since observed by every pilgrim, he said, "Get thee gone, enemy of Allah; I will act according to the will of my Lord." Satan went away enraged, but stepped yet twice more in a different form into Abraham's way, seeking to stagger his resolve. Abraham discovered him each time, and each time flung at him seven pebbles.

When they came to Mina, upon the spot where Ismael was to be offered, the latter said to Abraham, "Father, bind me tightly, that I may not resist, and thrust back thy robe, that it may not be sprinkled with my



blood, lest my mother mourn at the sight of it. Sharpen thy knife well, that it may kill me quickly and easily, for, after all, death is hard. When thou reachest home again, greet my mother, and take this robe to her as a memento.”

Abraham obeyed weepingly the will of his son, and was just on the point of slaying him, when the portals of heaven were opened, and the angels looked on and cried, “Well does this man deserve to be called the friend of Allah!”

At this moment the Lord placed an invisible collar of copper round Ismael's neck, so that Abraham, spite of his utmost exertions, was unable to wound him. But when he put his knife to Ismael's neck a third time, he heard a voice which cried, “Thou hast fulfilled the command which was imparted to thee in thy dream!”

At this call he raised his eyes, and Gabriel stood before him with a fine horned ram, and said, “Slaughter this ram as the ransom of thy son.”

This ram was the same which Abel offered, and which, in the meantime, had pastured in paradise.*

The sacrifice over, Abraham returned to Syria, but Ismael remained with his mother among the Amalekites, of whom he took a wife.

One day Abraham desired to visit him; but Ismael was engaged in the chase, and his wife was alone at home. Abraham greeted her, but she did not return his salutation. He prayed her to admit him for the night, but she refused his prayer; he then demanded something to eat and to drink, and she answered, “I have nothing but some impure water.” Then Abraham left her, and said, “When thy husband returns, greet him, and say, he must change the pillars of his house.” When Ismael came home to inquire whether any one had been with her during his absence, she described Abraham, and told what he had enjoined upon her. By her description Ismael recognized his father, and his words he interpreted, that he should separate himself from his wife, which he soon did.

Not long after this, the Dzorhamides wandered from Southern Arabia to the regions of Mecca, and drove out the Amalekites, who by their vicious courses had called down on themselves the punishment of Allah. Ismael married the daughter of their king, and learned of them the Arabic tongue. This woman, too, Abraham once found alone, and, on his greeting her, she returned his salutation kindly, rose up before

* Rabbi Elieser teaches: The ram came from the mountain Rabbi Jehoshua: an angel brought it from paradise, where it pastured under the tree of eternal life, and drank from the brook which flows beneath it. The ram diffused its perfume throughout the whole world. It was brought into paradise on the evening of the sixth day of the creation.— *Midrash*, p. 28.

him, and bade him welcome. On his inquiring how it fared with her, she replied, "Well, my lord. We have much milk, good meat, and fresh water."

"Have you any corn?" inquired Abraham.

"We shall obtain that too, by Allah's will. But we do not miss it. Only alight, and come in!"

"Allah bless you!" said Abraham; "but I can not tarry;" for he had given a promise to Sarah not to enter Hagar's house.

"Suffer me, at least, to wash thy feet," said the wife of Ismael, "for thou art indeed covered with dust."

Abraham then placed first his right foot, and then his left, upon a stone which lay before Ismael's house, and suffered himself to be washed. This stone was afterward employed in the temple, and the prints of Abraham's feet are visible upon it to this day.

After she had washed him, Abraham said "When Ismael returns, tell him to strengthen the pillars of his house!"

As soon as Ismael came home, his wife related to him what had happened to her with a stranger, and what message he had left.

Ismael inquired of his appearance; and when, from her answers he recognized who it was, he rejoiced greatly, and said, "It was my father, Abraham, the friend of Allah, who was doubtless well satisfied with thy reception, for his words signify nothing else than that I should bind thee more closely to me."

When Abraham was a hundred and ten years old, Allah commanded him, in a dream, to follow after the Sakinah; that is, a zephyr with two heads and two wings.

Abraham obeyed, and journeyed after the wind, which was changed into a cloud, at Mecca, on the spot where the temple still stands. A voice then called to him, "Build me a temple on the spot where the cloud is resting."

Abraham began to dig up the earth, and discovered the foundation-stone which Adam had laid. He then commanded Ismael to bring the other stones required for the building. But the black stone, which since the flood had been concealed in heaven, or, according to the opinion of some of the learned, on Mount Abu Kubeis, the angel Gabriel brought himself. This stone was even at that time so white and brilliant, that it illuminated during the night the whole sacred region belonging to Mecca.

One day, while Abraham was engaged with Ismael in the building of the temple, there came to him Alexander the Great, and asked what he was building; and when Abraham told him it was a temple to the one only God, in whom he believed, Alexander acknowledged him as the messenger of Allah, and encompassed the temple seven times on foot.

With regard to this Alexander, the opinions of the learned vary. Some believe him to have been a Greek, and maintain that he governed the whole world; first, like Nimrod before him as an unbeliever, and then, like Solomon after him, as a believer.

Alexander was the lord of light and darkness: when he went out with his army the light was before him, and behind him was the darkness, so that he was secure against all ambuscades, and by means of a miraculous white and black standard, he had also the power to transform the clearest day into midnight darkness, or black night into noonday, just as he unfurled the one or the other. Thus he was unconquerable, since he rendered his troops invisible at his pleasure, and came down suddenly upon his foes. He journeyed through the whole world in quest of the fountain of eternal life, of which, as his sacred books taught him, a descendant of Sam (Shem) was to drink, and become immortal. But his vizier, Al-kidhr, anticipated him, and drank of a fountain in the farthest west, thus obtaining eternal youth; and when Alexander came it was already dried up, for, according to the Divine decree, it had been created for one man only. His surname, the Two-cornered, he obtained, according to some, because he had wandered through the whole earth unto her two corners in the east and west; but according to others, because he wore two locks of hair which resembled horns; and according to a third opinion, his crown had two golden horns, to designate his dominion over the empires of the Greeks and Persians. But, lastly, it is maintained by many, that one day, in a dream, he found himself so close to the sun that he was able to seize him at his two ends in the east and west, and was therefore tauntingly called the Two-cornered.

The learned are similarly divided respecting the time in which he lived, his birthplace, parentage, and residence. Most of them, however, believe that there were two sovereigns of this name among the kings of antiquity. The elder of these, who is spoken of in the Koran, was a descendant of Ham, and contemporary of Abraham, and journeyed with Al-kidhr through the whole earth in search of the fountain of eternal life, and was commissioned by Allah to shut up behind an indestructible wall the wild nations of Jajug and Majug, lest they should have extirpated all the other inhabitants of the world. The younger Alexander was the son of Philip the Greek, one of the descendants of Japhet, and a disciple of the wise Aristotle at Athens.

But let us return to Abraham, who, after his interview with Alexander and Al-kidhr, continued the building of the temple until it had attained a height of nine, a breadth of thirty, and a depth of twenty-two cubits. He then ascended the Mount Abu Kubeis, and cried, "O ye inhabitants of the earth, Allah commands you to make a pilgrimage to this holy temple. Let his commandment be obeyed!"

Allah caused Abraham's voice to be heard by all men, both living and uncreated; and all cried with one voice, "We obey thy commandment, O Allah!" Abraham, together with the pilgrims, then performed those ceremonies which are yet observed to this day, appointed Ismael as the lord of the Kaaba, and returned to his son Isaac in Palestine.

When the latter attained the age of manhood, Abraham's beard became gray, which astonished him not a little, since no man before him had ever turned gray. But Allah had performed this wonder that Abraham might be distinguished from Isaac. For as he was a hundred years old when Sarah bore Isaac, the people of Palestine derided him, and doubted of Sarah's innocence; but Allah gave to Isaac such a perfect resemblance of his father, that every one who saw him was convinced of Sarah's conjugal fidelity. But to prevent their being mistaken for each other, Allah caused gray hairs to grow on Abraham as a mark of distinction; and it is only since that time that the hair loses its dark color in old age. When Abraham had attained to the age of two hundred, or, as some maintain, of a hundred and five-and-seventy years, Allah sent to him the Angel of Death in the form of an aged man. Abraham invited him to a meal; but the Angel of Death trembled so much, that, before he could put a morsel into his mouth, he besmeared therewith his forehead, eyes, and nose. Abraham then inquired, "Why tremblest thou thus?"

"From age," replied the Angel of Death.

"How old art thou?"

"One year older than thyself!"

Abraham lifted up his eyes to heaven, and exclaimed, "O Allah! take my soul to thee before I fall into such a state!"

"In what manner wouldst thou like to die, friend of Allah?" inquired the Angel of Death.

"I should like to breathe out my life at the moment when I fall down before Allah in prayer."

The angel remained with Abraham until he fell down in prayer, and then put an end to his life.

Abraham was buried by his son Isaac, near Sarah, in the cave of Hebron. For many ages the Jews visited this cave, in which also Isaac and Jacob were afterward buried. The Christians subsequently built a church over it, which was changed into a mosque when Allah gave this country unto the Mussulmans. But Hebron was called Kirjath Abraham (the city of Abraham), or simply Chalil (Friend), and is known by that name unto this day.

JOSEPH

JOSEPH, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, was from his childhood the darling of his father; and as he lived with an aunt at a distance from his home, Jacob's constant longing for him added much to the fervor of his parental love. When he was only six years of age, his aunt became so much attached to him, that, in order to prevent her ever being obliged to part with him, she invented the following expedient. She took the family girdle which she, being the firstborn, had inherited from Abraham through Isaac (it was the same which Abraham wore on his loins when thrown into the pile), girded Joseph with it, and accused him of theft, so that, according to the laws of those days, he became her slave for life. It was not until after her death that he returned again to the house of his father, and was naturally treated by him with greater care and tenderness than his elder brothers. Moreover, he was his eldest son by Rachael, the only one of his wives whom he had truly loved.

One morning Joseph told his father that he had seen in a dream how he and his brothers had each set a twig in the earth, and how those of his brothers withered, while his began to bloom, and shaded theirs with its foliage and blossoms. Jacob was so absorbed with the meaning of this dream, that he left a poor man who stood before him holding out his hand for alms unobserved, and allowed him to depart without a gift. It was this transgression that brought on him all those sufferings by which he was soon to be visited. On the following morning Joseph again related to his father: "I have dreamed that the sun, moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." Jacob could now no longer remain in doubt as to the meaning of these dreams; he perceived in them Joseph's future greatness, but recommended him not to speak of them to his brothers, who had long since envied him for the greater tenderness of his father. But although Jacob knew the sentiments of his sons toward Joseph, yet was he one day persuaded by them to send him with them to the pasture. Scarcely were they alone in the open field, when they began to beat and to mock him. He would have sunk under their ill treatment if Allah had not filled the heart of his brother Judah with compassion toward him. Judah said, "Do not kill your brother; if we but regain the undivided love of our father, we have attained our object. Let us therefore cast him into a pit till a caravan passes, and then sell him as a slave." Judah's advice was taken, and Joseph, stripped of his garments, was cast into a pit, where he must have been drowned had not Allah caused the angel Gabriel to place a large stone under his feet. Gabriel at the same time was instructed to illumine the pit by a jewel, and to cry,

“Joseph, the time will come when thou shalt call thy brothers to account, without their suspecting it.” The brothers then left the pit, but before returning home they slaughtered a lamb, and besmeared Joseph’s upper garment with its blood, which cannot be distinguished from that of man. They then said to their father, “While we were engaged in our occupations, there came a wolf and tore Joseph, who had remained with the stores; and, on seeking him afterward, we found this upper garment, which we recognized as his.”

“How,” said Jacob, “shall I believe that a wolf has devoured my son, while there is not a single rent in this garment?” (for the brothers had forgotten likewise to damage the garment). “Besides,” he added, “there has no wolf been seen in these regions for many years.”

“We imagined, indeed, that thou wouldst not give credence to our words,” said one of his sons; “but let us search for the wolf,” he continued, turning to his brothers, “in order to convince our father of the truth of our statement.”

They then provided themselves with all kinds of implements of the chase, and scoured the whole region round about, until they at last found a large wolf, which they caught alive, and accused it before Jacob as Joseph’s murderer; but Allah opened the mouth of the wolf, and he said:—

“Believe not, O son of Isaac! the accusation of thy envious sons. I am a wolf from a foreign country, and have long been wandering about to seek my young one, which one morning I missed on waking. How should I, who am mourning the loss of a wild beast, bereave the prophet of Allah of his son?”

Jacob then delivered the wolf from the hands of his sons, and sent them away again, so as not to have their faces before his eyes; only Benjamin, his youngest son, he kept with him. The ten brothers thereupon returned to the pit in which they had left Joseph, and arrived at the very moment when he was freed by some Bedouins, who, on their march from Madjan to Egypt, had sought to draw water from this pit, but had brought up Joseph instead, who clung to their bucket. “This youth,” said Judah to the leader of the caravan, ere Joseph could utter a word, “is our slave, whom we have confined in this pit on account of his disobedience. If you will take him with you to Egypt, and sell him there, you may buy him from us at a moderate rate.” The leader of the caravan was greatly rejoiced at this offer, for he knew well that so beautiful a youth would bring him much gain. He bought him, therefore, for a few drachms; and Joseph did not break silence, for he feared that his brothers might put him to death if he contradicted them. Trusting in Allah, he journeyed quietly with the Bedouins until he was passing the grave of his mother. There his grief overpowered him, and casting

himself on the ground, he wept and prayed. The leader of the caravan struck him, and would have dragged him away by force, when suddenly a black cloud overspread the sky, so that he started back affrighted, and prayed Joseph so long to forgive him, till the darkness again disappeared.

The sun was declining when the caravan entered the capital of Egypt, which was then governed by Rajjan, a descendant of the Amalekites. But Joseph's face shone brighter than the noonday sun, and the singular light which it diffused attracted all the maidens and matrons to their windows and terraces. On the following day he was exposed for sale before the royal palace. The richest women of the city sent their husbands and guardians to buy him; but they were outbidden by Potiphar, the treasurer of the king, who was childless, and designed to adopt Joseph as his son. Zuleicha, the wife of Potiphar, received Joseph kindly, and gave him new robes; she likewise appointed him a separate summer-house for his abode, because he refused to eat with the Egyptians, preferring to live on herbs and fruits. Joseph lived six years as Potiphar's gardener, and, although Zuleicha loved him passionately since his first entrance into her house, she conquered her feelings, and was satisfied to regard him from her kiosk as he performed his labors in the garden. But in the seventh year Zuleicha became love-sick: her cheeks grew pale, her gaze was lifeless, her form was bent, and her whole body consumed away. When no physician was able to heal her, her nurse said one day, "Zuleicha, confess that it is not thy body, but thy soul, which suffers in secret; sorrow is preying on thy health. Confide in thy nurse, who has fed thee with her own substance, and fostered thee since thy infancy like a mother. My advice, may, perhaps, be useful."

Zuleicha then threw herself into the arms of her aged friend, and avowed her love for Joseph, and her fruitless endeavors during six years to conquer it.

"Be of good cheer," said the matron to Zuleicha; "thou hast done more than others of thy sex, and art therefore excusable. Be thyself again; eat, drink, dress to advantage, take thy bath, that thy former beauty return; then shall Joseph's love surely exceed thy own. Besides, is he not thy slave? and from mere habit of obedience he will gratify all thy wishes."

Zuleicha followed her advice. In a short time she was as blooming and healthful as before; for she thought that only a favorable opportunity was needed to crown her wishes with success.

But Joseph resisted all her allurements; and when she at length found that all her efforts to lead him astray were in vain, she accused him before her husband, Potiphar, who threw him into prison; but Allah, who

knew his innocence, changed the dark cell in which he was confined to a bright and cheerful abode. He also commanded a fountain to spring up in the midst thereof, and a tree rose at his door, which gave him shade and pleasant fruit.

Joseph, who was soon universally known and feared for his wisdom and the skill which he possessed to interpret dreams, had not been long in prison when the following circumstance occurred: The king of the Greeks, who was then at war with Egypt, sent an ambassador to Rajjan, ostensibly with the design of negotiating for peace, but in reality only to seek the means of slaying this heroic king. The ambassador addressed himself to a Grecian matron who had for many years lived in Egypt, and asked her advice. "I know of no better means," said the Grecian to her countryman, "than to bribe either the king's chief cook or his butler to poison him." The ambassador made the acquaintance of them both, but, finding the chief cook the most tractable, he cultivated a closer intimacy with him, until he succeeded at last, by means of a few talents of gold, in determining him to poison the king.

As soon as he supposed that he had secured the object of his mission, he prepared for his departure, but previously visited his countrywoman, with the intention of communicating to her the chief cook's promise; but, as she was not alone, he could merely say that he had every reason to be gratified with his success. These words of the ambassador soon reached the king's ears; and as they could not be referred to his ostensible mission, since the negotiations for peace, on account of which he alleged that he had come, were entirely broken off, and the war had already recommenced, some secret or other was suspected. The Grecian was led before the king, and tortured, until she confessed all that she knew; and as Rajjan did not know which of them was guilty, he commanded that both the chief cook and butler should meanwhile be put into the same prison where Joseph was languishing. One morning they came to him and said, "We have heard of thy skill in the interpretation of dreams; tell us, we pray thee, what we may expect from our dreams of last night." The butler then related that he had pressed out grapes, and presented the wine to the king. But the chief cook said that he had carried meats in a basket in his hand, when the birds came and devoured the best of them. Joseph exhorted them first of all to faith in one God, and then foretold the butler's restoration to his former office, but to the chief cook he predicted the gallows. As soon as he had finished his speech, both of them burst out in laughter, and derided him, for they had not dreamed at all, and merely meant to put his skill to the test. But Joseph said to them, "Whether your dreams have been real or invented, I cannot say; but what I have prophesied is the judgment of Allah, which cannot be turned aside." He was not mistaken. The

spies of the king soon found out that the Greek ambassador had had frequent interviews with the chief cook, while he had seen the butler but once; the former was therefore condemned to death, but the latter was reinstated in his office.

Joseph entreated the butler, when out of prison, to remember him, and to obtain his freedom from the king. The butler did not remember him; but the tree before his door withered, and his fountain was dried up, because, instead of trusting in Allah, he had relied upon the help of a feeble man.* He was seven years in prison, when one morning he saw the butler again. He came to lead him before the king, who had had a dream which no one was able to interpret. But Joseph refused to appear unless he had first convinced the king of his innocence. He then related the cause of his imprisonment to the butler, who brought his answer to the king, and the latter immediately summoned Zuleicha and her friends. They confessed that they had falsely accused Joseph. Rajjan then sent a writing, which not only restored him to liberty, but even declared the imprisonment which he had endured to have been unjust, and the result of a calumnious charge.†

Joseph then put on the robes which Rajjan had sent him, and was conducted to the royal palace, where the king had assembled about him all the nobles, the priests, the astrologers, and the soothsayers of Egypt.

"I saw in my dream," said the king, as soon as Joseph was near him, "seven lean kine, which devoured seven fat ones; and seven blasted ears, which consumed seven rank and full ones. Canst thou tell me what this dream signifies?"

Joseph replied: "Allah will grant to thy kingdom seven plentiful years, which shall be succeeded by seven years of famine. Be therefore provident, and during the first seven years let as much grain be collected and stored up as shall be required for the maintenance of thy subjects during the seven years that shall follow."

This interpretation pleased the king so well that he made Joseph the high steward of his dominions in Potiphar's stead.

He now traveled through the country buying the grain, which, on account of the great abundance, was sold on most moderate terms, and built storehouses everywhere, but especially in the capital. One day, while riding out to inspect a granary beyond the city, he observed a

* The "Midrash" says: "Joseph remained yet two years in prison, because he had asked the chief butler to remember him."

† Potiphar's wife looked so ill, that her friends inquired what she complained of. She related her adventure with Joseph, and they said, "Accuse him before thy husband, that he may be put in prison." She entreated her friends to accuse him likewise to their husbands. They did so; and their husbands came to Potiphar complaining of Joseph's audacious demeanor toward their wives, etc.—*Midrash*, p. 45.

beggar in the street, whose whole appearance, though most distressing, bore the distinct traces of former greatness. Joseph approached her most compassionately, and held out to her a handful of gold. But she refused, and said, sobbing aloud: "Great prophet of Allah, I am unworthy of thy gift, although my transgression has been the stepping-stone to thy present fortune."

At these words, Joseph regarded her more closely, and behold, it was Zuleicha, the wife of his lord. He inquired after her husband, and was told that he had died of sorrow and poverty soon after his deposition.

On hearing this, Joseph led Zuleicha to a relative of the king, where she was treated like a sister, and she soon appeared to him as blooming and youthful as at the time of his entrance into her house. He asked her hand from the king, and married her with his permission, and she bore him two sons before the frightful years of famine, during which the Egyptians were obliged to sell to Rajjan, first their gold, their jewelry, and other costly things, for corn; then their estates and slaves, and at last their own persons, their wives and their children.

Yet not only in Egypt, but even in the adjacent countries, a great famine prevailed.

In the land of Canaan, too, there was no more corn to be found, and Jacob was forced to send all his sons, save Benjamin, to buy provisions in Egypt. He recommended them to enter the capital by the ten different gates, so as not to attract the evil eye by the beauty of their appearance, and to avoid public attention.

Joseph recognized his brothers, and called them spies, because they had come to him separately, though, according to their own confession, they were brothers. But when, to exculpate themselves, they explained to him the peculiar circumstances of their family, and, to justify their father's carefulness, they spoke of a lost brother, Joseph grew so angry, that he refused them the desired provisions, and demanded of them to bring down their brother Benjamin with them; and, to be certain of their return, he detained one of them as a hostage.

A few weeks after they returned again with Benjamin.

Jacob was indeed unwilling to let his youngest son depart, for he feared lest a misfortune similar to that of Joseph's would befall him: yet, to escape from famine, he was obliged at last to yield.

Joseph now directed that the corn which they had desired should be measured to them, but gave orders to his steward to conceal a silver cup in Benjamin's sack, to seize them as thieves at the gate of the city, and to lead them back to his palace.

"What punishment," demanded Joseph of the brethren, "is due to him that has stolen my cup?"

"Let him be thy slave," replied the sons of Jacob, certain that none of them was capable of committing so disgraceful an act. But when their sacks were opened, and the cup was found in Benjamin's, they cried to him; "Woe to thee! what hast thou done? Why hast thou followed the example of thy lost brother, who stole the idol of Laban, his grandfather, and the girdle of his aunt?"

Still, as they had sworn to their father not to step before his face without Benjamin, they prayed Joseph to keep one of their number as his slave in Benjamin's stead. But Joseph insisted on retaining Benjamin, and Reuben said therefore to his brothers, "Journey to our father, and tell him all that has befallen us; but I, who am the eldest of you, and have vowed unto him to sacrifice my life rather than to return without Benjamin, will remain here until he himself shall recall me. He will probably acknowledge that such an accident could not have been foreseen, and that, if our brother had been known to us as a thief, we should not have pledged ourselves for him."

But Jacob would not credit the story of his returning sons, and feared that they had now acted toward Benjamin as they had formerly done toward Joseph. He burst into tears, and wept till the light of his eyes was extinguished: his grief for Joseph also revived afresh, though he had never ceased to trust to the fulfilment of his dream.

But now the brothers returned once more into Egypt, determined to free Benjamin by force, for they were so powerful that they could engage single-handed with whole hosts of warriors. Judah, especially, when excited to wrath would roar like a lion, and kill the strongest men with his voice; nor could he be pacified until one of his kinsmen touched the prickly bunch of hair which, on such occasions, protruded from his neck.

However, they once more endeavored by entreaty to move Joseph to set Benjamin free; but when they spoke of their father's love for him, he inquired, "What, then, has become of Joseph?"

They said, "A wolf has devoured him."

But Joseph took his cup into his hand, and feigning to prophesy out of it, cried, "It is false; you have sold him."

When they denied this charge, Joseph told Zuleicha to give him the parchment which Judah had with his own hand given to the Bedouin when they sold him; and he showed it to them.

"We had a slave whose name was Joseph," said Judah; and he grew so enraged that he was on the point of roaring aloud; but his voice failed him, for Joseph had beckoned to his son Ephraim to touch his bunch of hair, which was so long that it nearly trailed on the ground. When his brothers saw this, there remained no doubt to them of their standing before Joseph, for they could have no other kinsman in Egypt. They

therefore fell down before him and cried: "Thou art our brother Joseph; forgive us!"

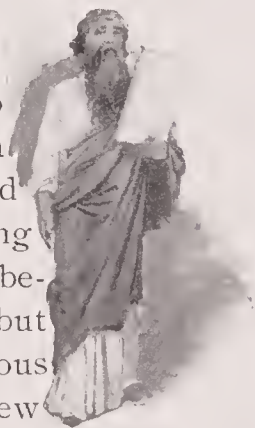
"You have nothing to fear from me," replied Joseph, "and Allah, the merciful, will also be gracious and pardon you. But rise, and go up quickly to our father, and bring him hither. Take my garment with you; cast it over his face, and his blindness will pass away."

Scarcely had they left the capital of Egypt when the wind carried the fragrance of Joseph's garment to their father, and when Judah, who was hastening in advance of his brothers, gave it to him, his eyes were opened again.* They now departed together for Egypt. Joseph came out to meet them, and, having embraced his father, exclaimed: "Lord, thou hast now fulfilled my dreams, and given me great power! Creator of heaven and earth, be thou my support in this world and the future! Let me die the death of a Moslem, and be gathered to the rest of the pious!"

Neither Jacob nor Joseph left Egypt any more; and both ordained in their testaments that they should be buried in Canaan by the side of Abraham, which was also done. May the peace of Allah be with them!

MOSES AND AARON

WHEN the time had come in which Allah again designed to send a prophet on the earth, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had three dreams in one night. In his first dream he heard a voice which called: "Pharaoh, repent! The end of thy dominion is at hand, for a youth of a foreign tribe shall humble thee and thy people before the whole world." The king awoke, disturbed by his dream, but after a short time he fell asleep again, and there appeared to him a lion, which threatened to tear a man in pieces. The man was armed only with a rod, but stood calmly until the lion rushed on him, when he struck it a single blow with his rod, and flung it dead into the Nile. The king awoke, more disturbed than before, and was able to sleep again only toward morning; but scarcely had he closed his eyes, when he saw Asia, his virtuous wife, riding through the air on a winged horse. The horse flew toward heaven; but she cried to him a last farewell, whereupon the earth split open under his feet, and swallowed him up. Pharaoh sprung



* The Jewish legend relates, that when the brothers learned of Joseph's safety, they were unwilling to communicate it to their father, fearing the violent effects of sudden joy. But the daughter of Asher, Jacob's grandchild, took her harp and sung to him the story of Joseph's life and greatness; and her beautiful music calmed his spirit. Jacob blessed her, and she was taken into paradise without having tasted death.

up from his couch as soon as he awoke, and summoned Haman, his vizier, commanding him to call together immediately all the magicians, the soothsayers, and astrologers of his capital. When they, many thousands in number, were assembled in the largest hall of the royal palace, Pharaoh ascended the throne, and told his dreams with a tremulous voice; but, although their interpretation was clear to every one in the whole assembly, no one ventured to avow the truth unto the king. Yet the latter, divining from their ghastly looks what was passing within them, commanded the chief of the astrologers not to conceal anything, and assured him beforehand of his grace, though he should predict the worst.

"Most mighty king!" said the chief of the astrologers, a man of nine-and-ninety years of age, whose silvery beard reached down to his breast, "it never was so difficult to thy servant to obey thy commands as at the present moment, when I am forced to predict to thee the greatest calamity. One of thy slaves of the daughters of Israel will bear a son, or has perhaps already borne him, who shall hurl thee and thy people into the lowest abyss." At these words Pharaoh began to weep aloud; he tore his crown from his head, rent his robes, and struck his breast and face with clenched fists. All who were present wept with him; yet no one presumed to speak a word of consolation. At last Haman, the vizier, stepped forward and said: "Great king, my fidelity and attachment are known to thee. Pardon, therefore, thy slave, if he has the boldness to blame thy dejection, and to suggest a plan which will frustrate the fulfilment of thy visions. As yet the power is in thy hand, and, if thou wilt but use it unsparingly, so shalt thou put to shame all the interpreters of thy dream. Let all the children that are born in this year, and all women that are with child, be immediately put to death, and thou mayest defy the apprehended peril."* Pharaoh followed this cruel counsel. Seven thousand children of one year and under were strangled forthwith, and as many women with child were thrown into the Nile. †

* Here the Mussulman legend differs from the Talmud, according to which Bileam gave this counsel. Job was silent; and Jethro, the king's third counselor, endeavored to dissuade the king from violence. Bileam was therefore destroyed by the Israelites. Job was led into temptation, and suffered greatly for his silence; but Jethro, who, on account of his clemency, was forced to flee into Midian, was rewarded by becoming the father-in-law of Moses.—*Midrash*, p. 52.

† In the year 130 after the settlement of the Israelites in Egypt, Pharaoh dreamed of an aged man who was holding a balance in his right hand. In one of its scales he placed all the sages and nobles of Egypt, and a little lamb in the other; and it outweighed them all. Pharaoh was amazed at the weight of the lamb, and told his dream on the following morning to his attendants. They were terrified; and one of them said: "This dream forbodes a great affliction which one of the children of Israel will bring upon Egypt. If it please the king, let us issue a royal edict, commanding every male child of Hebrew parents to be slain at its birth." The king did as he was advised.—*Midrash*, p. 51.

One night, when Amram, an Israelite, who was one of Pharaoh's viziers, was as usual in attendance on the king, the angel Gabriel appeared to him bearing on one of his wings Johabed, Amram's wife, the daughter of Jaser. He laid her down near Pharaoh, who was sunk in a deep sleep, and who snored like a slaughtered bull; and Gabriel said to Amram: "The hour is come when the messenger of Allah shall appear!" He vanished after having spoken these words, and left Johabed with Amram until the rising of the morning star. Then he carried her back on his wings to her dwelling before Pharaoh awoke.

That night the king had the same dreams which had so much disturbed him before.

As soon as he awoke he summoned Amram, and again commanded him to convene the interpreters of dreams. But he had scarcely uttered the word, when the chief of the astrologers begged for admittance. Pharaoh welcomed him, and inquired what had led him so early to the palace.

"Regard for thy throne and for thy life," answered the astrologer. "I read last night in the stars that the lad who shall one day deprive thee of life and empire has been conceived. I could therefore scarcely await the morning star to inform thee of this sad occurrence. Possibly thou mayest succeed in discovering the man who, notwithstanding thy prohibition and thy sage precautions, has found means of frustrating thy design."

Pharaoh was rather disposed to credit the astrologer, since the repetition of his dream indicated the same. He therefore reproached Amram for not having adopted better measures which might have rendered impossible the transgression of his commands.

But Amram said: "Pardon thy servant if he venture to doubt the infallibility of this master's interpretation, but the measures which I adopted, and which were executed under my own inspection, were such as to render this happening quite incomprehensible to me. Yesterday, as soon as I had left the royal palace, I betook myself to the other side of the river, and, summoning all the men of Israel, threatened with death him who should under any pretext whatever remain behind. Nevertheless, to make sure that if any one had remained concealed in his dwelling he should still be separated from his wife, I commanded all women to be shut up in another quarter of the city, which, like the camp of the men, I surrounded with troops, so that no one was able to go in or out. Meanwhile, I will so act as if I were persuaded of this astrologer's statement. If thou desire it, I will strangle the women, or subject them to severer regulations; we shall discover the guilty one, and destroy her." But Allah infused into Pharaoh's heart, compassion toward all the women of Israel and he contented himself with having them

more rigidly guarded. But these measures, according to the decision of Allah, proved abortive; for, as Amram was not permitted to move out of the royal palace, Haman did not in the least suspect Johabed, and made her an exception from the common rule, as she was the vizier's wife. Within a twelvemonth from that time Johabed gave birth to a man child, whom she called Musa (Moses). She was delivered without a pain.*

But the sorrow of her heart was the greater when she cast her eyes on the little child, whose face beamed like the moon in her splendor, and thought of his death, which was drawing nigh. Yet Moses rose, and said, "Fear nothing, my mother; the God of Abraham is with us."

In the night when Moses was born the idols in all the temples of Egypt were dashed down. Pharaoh heard a voice in his dream, which called to him: "Turn to the only God, the Creator of heaven and earth, or thy destruction is inevitable." In the morning the astrologer appeared again and announced to Pharaoh the birth of the lad who would one day be his destruction. Haman now commanded all the dwellings of the Israelitish women to be searched afresh, and made no exception even with Johabed's, fearing lest some other woman might have concealed her child therein. Johabed had gone out when Haman entered her house, but had previously hid her child in the oven, and laid much wood before it. Finding nothing in the whole house, Haman commanded the wood in the oven to be lighted, and went away, saying, "If there be a child concealed there, it will be consumed." When Johabed returned, and saw the blazing fire, she uttered a frightful cry of woe; but Moses called to her, "Be calm, my mother; Allah has given the fire no power over me." But as the vizier frequently repeated his visits, and Johabed feared lest he might one day have the wood removed instead of lighting the oven, she resolved to intrust her child to the Nile rather than to expose it to the danger of being discovered by Haman. She obtained, therefore, a little ark from Amram, laid Moses in it, and carried it to the river at midnight; but, passing a sentinel, she was stopped, and asked what the ark contained which she carried under her arm. At that instant the earth opened under the sentinel's feet, and engulfed him up to his neck; and there came a voice out of the earth, which said: "Let this woman depart unharmed, nor let thy tongue betray what thine eyes have seen, or thou art a child of death." The soldier shut his eyes in token of obedience, for his neck was already so compressed that he could not speak, and as soon as Johabed had passed on, the earth vomited him forth again. When she arrived at the place on

*On these words, "And she saw that the child was fair," the "Midrash" offers the following reflection: "The learned maintain that at the birth of Moses there appeared a light which shone over the whole world, for in the account of the creation we have the same phrase: 'The Lord saw the light that it was good.'"

the shore where she designed to conceal the ark among the rushes, she beheld a huge black serpent: it was Iblis, who placed himself in her way in this form, with the intention of staggering her resolve. Affrighted, she started back from the vile reptile; but Moses called to her from the ark: "Be without fear, my mother; pass on: my presence shall chase away this serpent." At these words Iblis vanished. Johabed, then opening the ark once more, pressed Moses to her heart, closed it, and, weeping and sobbing, laid it among the reeds, in hopes that some compassionate Egyptian woman would come and take it up. But as she departed, she heard a voice from heaven exclaim: "Be not cast down, O wife of Amram! we will bring back thy son to thee; he is the elected messenger of Allah."

To manifest the weakness of human machinations against that which the Kalam has written on the heavenly tablets of Fate, Allah had ordained that the child now at the mercy of the floods should be saved by Pharaoh's own family. He commanded, therefore, as soon as Johabed had left the Nile, that the angel who was set over the waters should float the ark in which Moses lay into the canal which united Pharaoh's palace with the river; for, on account of his leprous daughters, to whom his physicians had prescribed bathing in the Nile, he had constructed a canal, by which the water of that river was guided into a large basin in the midst of the palace gardens. The eldest of the seven princesses first discovered the little ark, and carried it to the bank to open it. On her removing the lid, there beamed a light upon her which her eyes were not able to endure. She cast a veil over Moses, but at that instant her own face, which hitherto had been covered with scars and sores of all the most hideous colors imaginable, shone like the moon in its brightness and purity, and her sisters exclaimed in amazement, "By what means hast thou been so suddenly freed from leprosy?"*

"By the miraculous power of this child," replied the eldest. "The glance which beamed upon me when I beheld it unveiled has chased away the impurity of my body, as the rising sun scatters the gloom of night."

The six sisters, one after the other, now lifted the veil from Moses's face, and they too became fair as if they had been formed of the finest silver. The eldest then took the ark on her head, and carried it to her mother, Asia, relating to her in how miraculous a manner both she and her sisters had been healed.

*The daughter of Pharaoh went to the river, for she was a leper, and not permitted to use warm baths; but she was healed as soon as she stretched out her hand to the crying infant, whose life she preserved. She said within herself, "He will live to be a man; and whoever preserves a life is like the savior of a world." For this cause also she obtained the blessings of the life to come.—*Midrash*, p. 51.

Asia took Moses from the ark, and brought him to Pharaoh, followed by the seven princesses. Pharaoh started involuntarily when Asia entered his chamber, and his heart was filled with dark presentiments; besides, it was not eustomary for his women to come to him uninvited. But his face regained its cheerfulness when he beheld the seven princesses, whose beauty now surpassed all their contemporaries.

“Who are these maidens?” he inquired of Asia. “Are they slaves whom some tributary prince has sent to me?”

“They are thy daughters, and here upon my arm is the physieian who has eured them of their leprosy.”

She then narrated to the king how the princesses had found Moses, and how they had reeovered from their distemper on beholding him.

Pharaoh was transported with joy, and for the first time in his life embraced his beloved daughters. But after a little while his features were overcast again, and he said to Asia: “This child must not live: who knows whether his mother be not an Israelite, and he the ehild of whom both my dreams, as well as my astrologers, have foreboded me so much evil?”

“Dost thou still believe in idle dreams, the mere whispers of Satan, and in the still more idle interpretations given by men who boast of reading the future in the stars? Hast thou not slain the young mothers of Israel and their children, and even searched their houses? Besides, will it not always be in thy power to destroy this fragile being? Meanwhile, take it to thy palace, in gratitude for the miraeulous cure of thy daughters.”

The seven princesses seconded the prayers of Asia, until Pharaoh relented, permitting the ehild to be brought up in the royal palace. Searcely had he pronouned the words of graace when Asia hastened baek to her apartments with the child, and sent for an Egyptian nurse; but Moses thrust her away, for it was not the will of the Highest that he should receive nourishment from a worshiper of idols.* Asia commanded another nurse to be brought; but her also, as well as a third one, Moses would not embrace. On the following morning the queen made known that any woman, who would engage to nurse a strange ehild, for a handsome remuneration, should repair to the royal palace. After this the entire court of the castle was filled with women and maidens, many of whom had come from curiosity only. Among the latter was Kolthum (Miriam), the sister of Moses. When she heard that

* From these words, his sister said to the daughters of Pharaoh, “Shall I call a Hebrew nurse?” We may conclude that they had taken him (Moses) to all the Egyptian women, but that he refused to receive food from them, for he thought, “Shall the lips which are destined to speak with the Shekinah touch that which is unclean?”—*Midrash*, p. 51.

the child had been found in an ark floating on the water, and that it still refused to take nourishment, she ran quickly and told her mother. Johabed hastened to the palace, and was announced to Asia as a nurse, for the severe regulations against the Israelitish women were now removed. Moses scarcely beheld his mother, when he stretched out his arms toward her, and as he embraced her immediately, she was engaged as a nurse for the space of two years. After the expiration of that time, Asia sent her away with many rich presents, but kept Moses with her, intending to adopt him as her son, since she had no male descendants. Pharaoh himself became daily more attached to the child, and often spent whole hours together in playing with him. One day—Moses was then in his fourth year—while Pharaoh was playing with him, he took the crown from the king's head, and throwing it on the ground, thrust it away with his foot. The king's suspicion was roused afresh: enraged, he ran to Asia, reproaching her for having persuaded him to let Moses live, and manifested once more a desire to put him to death; but Asia laughed at him for permitting the naughtiness of a child to excite in him such gloomy thoughts.

"Well, then," said Pharaoh, "let us see whether the child has acted thoughtlessly or with reflection? Let a bowl with burning coals and one with coin be brought. If he seize the former, he shall live; but if he stretch out his hand to the latter, he has betrayed himself."

Asia was forced to obey, and her eyes hung in painful suspense on Moses's hand, as if her own life had been at stake. Endowed with manly understanding, Moses was on the point of taking a handful of the shining coin, when Allah, watching over his life, sent an angel, who, against the child's will, directed his hand into the burning coals, and even put one to his mouth. Pharaoh was again reassured, and entreated Asia for forgiveness; but Moses had burned his tongue, and was a stammerer from that day.*

When Moses was six years old, Pharaoh one day teased him so much, that in his anger he pushed with his foot so violently against the throne on which Pharaoh sat, that it was overthrown. Pharaoh fell on the earth, and bled profusely from his mouth and nose. He sprang to his feet, and drew his sword against Moses to thrust him through. Asia and the seven princesses were present, yet all their endeavors to calm him were in vain. Then there flew a white cock toward the king, and cried, "Pharaoh, if thou spill the blood of this child, thy daughters shall be more leprous than before." Pharaoh cast a glance on the princesses;

*The Jewish legend accounts from this occurrence for the words of Moses in Exodus, chap. iv., ver. 10: "O my Lord! I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."

and as from dread and fright their faces were already suffused with a ghastly yellow, he desisted again from his bloody design.

Thus Moses grew up in Pharaoh's house, amid every variety of danger, which God, however, warded off in a miraculous manner. One morning — he was then already in his eighteenth year — he was performing his ablutions in the Nile, and prayed to Allah. An Egyptian priest saw him, and observed that he prayed unlike the other Egyptians, who always turn their faces toward Pharaoh's palace, while the eyes of Moses were directed on high.

"Whom worshipest thou?" inquired the priest, in great astonishment.

Moses, having finished his prayer, replied, "My Lord!"

"Thy father Pharaoh?"

"May Allah curse thee, and all those who worship the king as God!"

"Thou shalt atone with thy life for this imprecation. I will forthwith go to thy father, and accuse thee before him."

Then Moses prayed, "Lord of the waters! who hast destroyed by the floods the whole human race, save Noah and Audj, let them even now overflow their banks, to engulf this blasphemous priest."

He had scarcely pronounced these words, when there arose such waves in the Nile as only the fiercest tempest excites in the mighty ocean. One of them rolled over the shore, and swept away the priest into the stream.

When he saw his life in danger, he cried out, "Mercy! O Moses, have mercy! I swear that I will conceal what I have heard from thee."

"But if thou break thine oath?"

"Let my tongue be cut out of my mouth."

Moses saved the priest, and went his way; but when he came to the royal palace he was summoned before Pharaoh, beside whom sat the priest, who had evidently betrayed him.

"Whom worshipest thou?" inquired Pharaoh.

"My Lord," replied Moses, "who gives me meat and drink, who clothes me, and supplies all my wants." Moses thereby intended the only God, the Creator and Preserver of the world, unto whom we are indebted for all things.

But Pharaoh, according to the will of Allah, referred this reply to himself, and commanded that the priest, as a calumniator, should have his tongue cut out, and be hanged before the palace.

Having attained the age of manhood, Moses frequently conversed with the Israelites during his excursions, and listened eagerly to their accounts of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but especially of Joseph, for his mother had long ere this revealed to him the secret of his birth. One

day he beheld how a Kopt was most cruelly treating an Israelite, by name Samiri. The latter implored his protection, and Moses struck the Egyptian a blow which stretched him lifeless on the earth. On the following morning Samiri was again striving with an Egyptian, and prayed Moses again to help him; but the latter reproached him for his quarrelsome disposition, and raised his hand threateningly against him. When Samiri saw this, he said, "Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Kopt yesterday?" The Egyptian who was present heard it, and accused Moses of murder, before Pharaoh. The king directed that he should be delivered to the relations of the slain; but one of the royal household, a friend of Moses, informed him immediately of Pharaoh's sentence, and he succeeded in making his escape in time.

Moses wandered many days through the wilderness, until Allah sent him an angel in the form of a Bedouin, who guided him into Midian, where the faithful priest Shuib (Jethro) dwelt, in the midst of idolaters. The sun was declining when he arrived before a well at the outskirts of the little town, and there stood Lija and Safurja, the two daughters of Shuib, with their flocks.

"Why do you not water your cattle," inquired Moses, "since the night will soon overtake you?"

"We do not venture to do so," replied Lija, "until the other shepherds, who hate us and our father, have first watered theirs."

Then Moses himself led their cattle to the well and said, "If any of the shepherds has aught against you, I myself will see to the matter." The maidens yielded; nor did any of the shepherds, who assembled around, dare to oppose Moses, for his holy appearance filled them with awe.

When Shuib, astonished at the unusually early return of his daughters, heard from them that a stranger had watered their cattle, he sent Safurja to the well to invite him to the house. But Moses, although suffering with hunger, did not touch the refreshment that was set before him, and when Shuib inquired why he rejected his hospitality, he replied, "I am not one of those who accept a reward for any good deed that they have done."

"In like manner, I," replied Shuib, "am not of those who show hospitality only to their benefactors. My house is open to every stranger; and as such, not as the protector of my daughters, thou mayest accept my invitation."

Moses then ate till he was satisfied, and related during his repast what had befallen him in Egypt.

"As thou mayest not return to thy home," said Shuib, when he had come to the conclusion of his narrative, "remain with me as my

shepherd, and, after serving me eight or ten years faithfully, I will give thee my daughter Safurja to wife."

Moses accepted this offer, and pledged himself to eight years' service, but added that he should cheerfully remain two years longer, if he had nothing to complain of; and he abode ten years with him. On the morning following his arrival, he accompanied the daughters of Shuib to the pasture; but as he had fled from Egypt without a staff, Safurja brought to him the miraculous rod of her father, which had served for the support and defense of the prophets before him.* Adam had brought it with him from paradise: after his death it passed into the hands of Sheth; after that it went to Idris, then to Noah, Salih, and Abraham. Moses was thirty years old when he entered the service of Shuib, and thirty-eight on his marriage with Safurja. In his fortieth year he determined to return to Egypt, in order to inquire after his relatives and brethren in the faith. It was a cold and stormy day when he drew near to Mount Thur, on which a bright fire was blazing; and he said to his wife: "Rest here in the valley; I will see what this flame signifies, and bring thee a few brands on my return." But when Moses came near the fire, he heard a voice out of the midst of the burning and yet unconsumed bush exclaim: "Take off thy shoes, for thou art in the presence of thy Lord, who manifests himself to thee as 'The Light, to sanctify thee as his prophet, and to send thee to Pharaoh, whose unbelief and cruelty are so great, that long ere this the mountains would have crushed him, the seas have swallowed him up, or the flames of heaven consumed his soul, if I had not determined to give in his person a proof of my omnipotence unto the whole world."

Moses fell down and said: "Lord, I have slain an Egyptian, and Pharaoh will put me to death if I appear before him; besides, my tongue has been paralyzed since my infancy, so that I am not able to speak before kings."

"Fear not, son of Amram!" replied the voice from the fire. "If thy Lord had not watched over thee, thou would have been changed into dust even before thy birth; but as regards thy imperfect speech, it shall

*The rod of Moses was created on the sixth day, and given to Adam while yet in Paradise: he left it to Enoch, and he gave it to Shem; from him it descended to Isaac and Jacob. The latter took it with him to Egypt, and before his death presented it to Joseph. When he died it was taken, with the rest of his goods, to Pharaoh's house, where Jethro, being one of the king's magicians, saw it; and taking it with him to Midian, he planted it in his garden, where no one was able to approach it until the arrival of Moses. He read the mysterious words written upon the staff and took it without difficulty from the ground. Jethro, who saw this, exclaimed, "This is the man who shall deliver Israel!" and gave him his daughter Zipora. With this staff, Moses kept Jethro's flock during forty years, without being attacked by wild beasts, and without losing any from his fold.—*Midrash*, p. 53.

not prevent the exercise of thy calling, for I give to thee thy brother Aaron as vizier, who shall communicate my will to Pharaoh.

“Go fearlessly to Pharaoh; the staff which is in thy hand shall protect thee from violence. Thou canst persuade thyself of it if thou wilt but lay it down on the earth.”

Moses threw away his staff, and behold! it was changed into a large living serpent. He would have fled from it, but the angel Gabriel held him back, and said, “Lay hold of it; it can do thee no harm.” Moses stretched out his hand toward it, and it once more was changed into a staff. Strengthened by this miracle, he was about to return to Safurja to pursue with her his way to Egypt; but the angel Gabriel said to him: “Thou hast now higher duties than those of a husband. By command of Allah, I have already taken back thy wife to her father, but thou shalt fulfill thy mission alone.”

On the night that Moses was treading Egyptian ground, there appeared unto Aaron, who had succeeded his father, Amram, as vizier to Pharaoh, an angel with a crystal cup filled with the rarest old wine; and said, as he handed him the cup: “Drink, Aaron, of the wine which the Lord has sent thee in token of glad tidings. Thy brother Moses has returned to Egypt: God has chosen him to be his prophet, and thee to be his vizier. Arise, and go to meet him.”

Aaron instantly left Pharaoh's chamber, in which he, as once his father before him, was obliged to watch, and went beyond the city toward the Nile. But when he reached the bank of the stream, there was not a single boat at hand to ferry him over. Suddenly he beheld a light at a distance; and on its nearer approach he discovered a horseman, who flew toward him with the speed of the wind. It was Gabriel mounted on the steed Hizam, which shone like the purest diamond, and whose neighings were celestial songs of praise. Aaron's first thought was that he was pursued by one of Pharaoh's men, and he was on the brink of casting himself into the Nile; but Gabriel made himself known in time to prevent him, and lifted him on his winged horse, which carried them both to the opposite bank of the Nile. Here Moses was standing; and as soon as he beheld his brother, he cried aloud, “Truth has come, and falsehood has fled!” Gabriel then placed Moses also beside him, and set him down before the house of his mother, but Aaron he carried back into the royal palace, and when Pharaoh awoke, his vizier was again at his post. Moses spent the remainder of that night and the whole of the next day with his mother, to whom he was obliged to relate all that had befallen him in a foreign land since the day of his flight from Egypt. The second night he spent with Aaron in Pharaoh's chamber. All the doors of the palace, however fast they were

closed, opened of their own accord as soon as he touched them with his rod, and the guards standing before them became as if petrified. But when they reported in the morning what they had seen, and the porter who came in with his keys to open the doors of the palace found them wide open, while neither door nor lock exhibited any mark of violence, and nothing of the costly things scattered through the various saloons was missing, Haman said to Pharaoh: "Aaron, who has watched by thee, must explain this matter; for, as thy chamber has likewise been opened, the intruder can have had no other object than to converse with him."*

Pharaoh immediately summoned Aaron before him, and, threatening him with the rack, demanded who his nightly visitor had been. Aaron, in the conviction that Allah would not leave his prophet in the power of an infidel king, avowed that it was his brother Moses who had been with him. Pharaoh immediately sent Haman with a detachment of the royal body-guard into Moses's dwelling, in order to bring him to judgment in the presence of all the viziers and high officers of state, who were forthwith ordered to assemble in the grand hall. He himself presided on his throne, which was entirely of gold, and adorned with the most costly pearls and diamonds. When Moses stepped into the judgment hall, Pharaoh swooned away, for he recognized in him the child that had been saved by his daughters, and now feared him the more, inasmuch as he knew that he was Aaron's brother, and consequently an Israelite. But he soon recovered, on their sprinkling him with rose-water, and with his consciousness also returned his former stubbornness of heart. Pretending never to have seen him before, he inquired, "Who art thou?"

"I am the servant of Allah, and his messenger."

"Art thou not Pharaoh's slave?"

"I acknowledge no other lord than the only Allah."

"To whom art thou sent?"

* Rabbi Meier says, "Pharaoh's palace had 400 gates, 100 on each side; and before each gate stood 60,000 tried warriors." It was therefore necessary for Gabriel to introduce Moses and Aaron by another way. On seeing them, Pharaoh said, "Who has admitted them?" He summoned the guards, and commanded some of them to be beaten, and others to be slain. But as Moses and Aaron returned the next day again, the guards, when called in, said: "These men are sorcerers, for they certainly have not come in through the gates." On the same page it is said, "Before the gate of the royal palace were two lionesses, which did not suffer any one to pass through without the express command of Pharaoh, and they would have rushed upon Moses; but he raised his staff, their chains fell off, and they followed him joyfully into the palace, as a dog follows his master after a long separation," etc. And again: "The 400 gates of the palace were guarded by bears, lions, and other ferocious beasts, who suffered no one to pass unless they fed them with flesh. But when Moses and Aaron came, they gathered about them, and licked the feet of the prophets, accompanying them to Pharaoh." — *Midrash*, pp. 44, 45.

“To thee, in order to admonish thee to faith in Allah and in me, his messenger, and to lead forth the Israelites out of thy country.”

“Who is the Allah in whose name thou speakest to me?”

“The only One, the Invisible, who hath created heaven and earth, and all that in them is.”

Pharaoh then turned to Aaron, and inquired of him, “What thinkest thou of the words of this foolhardy man?”

“I believe in the only God, whom he proclaims, and in him as his messenger.”

On hearing this, Pharaoh said to Haman, “This man has ceased to be my vizier, take off forthwith his robe of honor!”

Haman then took his purple robe from him, and he stood ashamed, for the upper part of his body was uncovered. Moses cast over him his woolen garment; but, as he was not accustomed to such coarse raiment, he trembled in all his limbs. At that moment the ceiling of the hall was opened, and Gabriel flung a robe around Aaron, glittering with so many diamonds that all who were present were dazzled, as if the lightning had flashed through the darkest night. Pharaoh admired this robe, which had not a single seam, and inquired of his treasurer what might be its value.

“Such a garment,” replied the troubled treasurer, “is priceless, for the meanest of the jewels is worth ten whole years’ revenue of Egypt. Such diamonds I have never beheld in any bazaar, nor are the like to be found among all the treasures that have been amassed in this palace from the earliest times. None but sorcerers can obtain possession of such jewels, by Satanic arts.”

“Ye are then sorcerers!” said Pharaoh to Moses and Aaron. “Be it so. I esteem sorcerers highly, and will make you the heads of this fraternity, if ye will swear not to use your art to my prejudice.”

“The Lord of the distant east and west,” rejoined Moses, “has sent me as a prophet unto thee, in order to convert thee. We are no sorcerers.”

“And wherewithal wilt thou prove thy mission?”

Moses flung his staff on the ground, and instantly it was changed into a serpent as huge as the largest camel. He glanced at Pharaoh with fire-darting eyes, and raised Pharaoh’s throne aloft to the ceiling, and opening his jaws, cried: “If it pleased Allah, I could not only swallow up thy throne, with thee and all that are here present, but even thy palace and all that it contains, without any one perceiving the slightest change in me.”

Pharaoh leaped from his throne, and adjured Moses, by Asia his wife, to whom he was indebted for life and education, to protect him against this monster. At the mention of Asia’s name, Moses felt compassion

toward Pharaoh, and called the serpent to him. The serpent placed the throne in its proper position, and stepped like a tender lamb before Moses. He put his hand into his jaws, and seized him by his tongue, whereupon he once more became a staff. But scarcely was this peril warded off from Pharaoh, when his heart again opened to the whispers of Satan, and instead of lending his ear to Moses, he demanded of the viziers to counsel him what he should do.

“Let the heads of these two rebels be cut off,” said Haman, “and fear nothing from them; for all that they represent as divine wonders is nothing but idle delusion.”

“Do not follow this counsel, mighty king!” cried Hiskil, the treasurer. “Think of the contemporaries of Noah, and the nations of Aad and Thamud. They also believed Noah, Hud, and Salih, the prophets whom Allah had sent, to be demons and deceivers, until the wrath of Allah fell on them, destroying them and their possessions by fire and water.”

But now uprose Haman’s predecessor, a hoary man of a hundred and twenty years of age, and said: “Permit me, also, O king of kings! before I descend to the grave, to impart to thee my opinion. What king can boast of having so many magicians in his kingdom as thou? I therefore hold it to be the wisest plan that thou fix on a day in which they all may assemble together, and have a meeting with Moses and Aaron. If these are nothing but sorcerers, the Egyptian masters of this art will not be a whit inferior to them; and then thou art still at liberty to do with them according to thy high will. But if they put thy sorcerers to shame, then are they indeed the servants of a mightier God, to whom we shall be forced to submit.”

Pharaoh approved of the counsel of his aged vizier, and commanded all the sorcerers of Egypt, seventy thousand in number, to repair to the capital at the expiration of a month.

When they were assembled, the king commanded them to choose seventy chiefs from their body, and these seventy were again to be represented by the two most renowned among them, in order to contend in magic arts with Moses and Aaron in the face of the whole people. Pharaoh’s command was punctually obeyed, and the choice of the magicians fell on Risam and Rejam, two men of Upper Egypt, who were no less esteemed and feared throughout the whole country than Pharaoh himself.

On an appointed day, Pharaoh, for whom a large silken tent, embroidered with pearls and supported on silver pillars, had been erected, proceeded to a large plain beyond the city, accompanied by his viziers and the nobles of his kingdom: Risam and Rejam on the one side of the

tent, and Moses and Aaron on the other, awaited his commands; and the whole population of Egypt was on the field of contest from early dawn, anxious to see which party would obtain the victory. Pharaoh demanded of the two Egyptians to change their rods into serpents. This was done, and Haman said to Pharaoh: "Did not I tell thee that Moses and Aaron were no more than other sorcerers, who deserve chastisement for having abused their art?"

"Thou art too hasty in thy judgment," said Hiskil. "Let us see first whether Moses will not be able to do still greater things than these."

At a sign from the king, Moses stepped forward and prayed to Allah that he would glorify his name in the face of all Egypt. Allah then brought to naught the charm of the Egyptians, which was mere illusion, and it was unto all present as if a dark veil was removed from their eyes; and they recognized again as staffs what had appeared before as serpents. Moses threw his staff upon the earth, and it became a serpent with seven heads, which did not remain motionless like those of the magicians, but pursued the two sorcerers with open jaws. They threw themselves to the earth, and exclaimed: "We believe in the Lord of the World, the God of Moses and Aaron."

Pharaoh cried to them, wrathfully: "How dare you confess yourselves to another faith without my permission, simply because these sorcerers are more dexterous than you? Unless you recall your words, I shall cause your hands and feet to be cut off, and shall hang you on the gallows."

"Wilt thou punish us," replied the sorcerers, "because we cannot deny the signs of Allah? Behold, we are prepared to yield up our lives in support of our faith."

Pharaoh, in order to set a terrible example, caused the threatened punishment to be executed on them, and they died the first martyrs to the faith of Moses.

The king now waxed daily more cruel; every believer was put to death with the most excruciating tortures. He did not even spare his own daughter, Masheta, the wife of Hiskil, on learning that she no longer honored him as God. She endured with admirable fortitude the death by fire, after seeing all her children slaughtered before her eyes at Pharaoh's command.

Asia herself was now accused before him of apostasy, and even she was condemned to death; but the angel Gabriel comforted her with the annunciation that she should hereafter be united with Mohammed in paradise, and gave her a potion by which she died without pain.

Pharaoh now conceived, like Nimrod before him, the iniquitous design to war against the God of Moses. He therefore caused a tower to

be built, at which fifty thousand men, mostly Israelites, were compelled to labor day and night, he himself riding up and down among them to urge on the indolent. But Moses prayed to Allah, and the tower fell in, crushing under its ruins all those Egyptians who had committed violence against the Israelites. But even this judgment made only a passing impression on the heart of Pharaoh, for Allah desired to perform still greater wonders before he condemned the soul of the king to eternal hell. First he visited him with a flood. The Nile overflowed its banks, and the waters rose so high that they reached to the neck of the tallest man. After that, a host of locusts invaded the land, which not only consumed all provisions, but even copper and iron. Then followed all kinds of disgusting vermin, which defiled all meats and drinks, and filled all garments and beds, so that Pharaoh, however often he might change his raiment, had not a moment's rest. When this plague disappeared, and Pharaoh still resisted the wishes of Moses, all the waters were changed to blood as soon as an Egyptian took them in his hand, but remained unchanged for the Israelites.

Finally, many of the Egyptians, especially the more eminent, who had strengthened Pharaoh in his unbelief, were turned into stone, together with all their goods. Here, one might see a petrified man, sitting in the bazaar, with a balance in his hand; there, another, marking something with the Kalam, or counting gold; and even the gate-keeper of the palace stood there turned to stone, holding a sword in his right hand. Omar Ibn Abd Alasis* had in his possession all kinds of petrified fruits of those times, and frequently showed them to his guests as a warning against unbelief. At Moses's prayer, Allah revived the petrified men; but when Pharaoh refused afresh to permit the Israelites to depart, there burst out upon the land so thick a darkness, that whoever happened to be standing could not sit down, and whoever happened to be sitting had no power to rise. Thereupon the Nile was dried up, so that man and beast died of thirst. On this occasion, Pharaoh himself ran to Moses, and adjured him to pray for him once more, that the water might flow back into the Nile. For the last time Moses prayed for him, and the Nile was not only filled to its banks, but there also streamed from it a little brook, which followed Pharaoh whithersoever he went, so that at any moment he was able to supply with water both man and beast. But instead of turning to Allah, the king made use of this special favor also as a means of inducing the people to reverence him still as God.

The long-suffering of the Lord was now exhausted, and the king was himself to pronounce his sentence, and to choose the manner of death

*This Omar was the eighth caliph of the house of Omarides. He ascended the throne in the ninety-ninth year of the Hegira, and was previously governor of Egypt.

which his wickedness had deserved. Gabriel assumed the appearance of a noble Egyptian, and accused before Pharaoh one of his slaves, who, in his absence, had proclaimed himself the lord of the house, and constrained the other domestics to serve him. "This impostor," said Pharaoh, "deserves to die."

"How shall I put him to death?"

"Let him be thrown into the water."

"Give me a written warrant."

Pharaoh commanded an instrument to be drawn up, according to which any slave who usurped the honors of his master was to be drowned.

Gabriel left Pharaoh, and gave Moses the command to quit Egypt with his people. Pharaoh pursued them with his host, and inclosed them on all sides, so that there remained no other way of escape to Israel than toward the Red Sea. Hemmed in between the Egyptians and the sea, they fell with reproaches upon Moses, who had brought them into this dangerous position; but he raised his staff toward the waters, and instantly there were twelve paths opened through the sea for the twelve tribes of Israel, each of which was separated from the rest by a lofty, yet quite transparent wall.

When Pharaoh reached the seashore, and beheld the dry paths in the midst of the sea, he said to Haman: "Now Israel is lost to us, for even the waters seem to favor their flight."

But Haman replied: "Are not those paths opened likewise for us? We shall soon overtake them with our horse."

Pharaoh took the path in which Moses marched with the tribe of Levi; but his steed grew restive, and was unwilling to go forward. Then mounted Gabriel, in human form, on the horse Ramka, and rode in before Pharaoh. This horse was so beautiful, that as soon as the king's steed saw him, he plunged in behind.

But when Pharaoh and his whole host were in the sea, the angel Gabriel turned to the king, and showed him the warrant of the previous day, bearing the royal seal, and said: "Frail mortal, who didst desire to be worshiped as God! behold, thou hast condemned thyself to die by water." At these words, the twelve walls tumbled in, the floods burst forth, and Pharaoh and all that followed him perished in the waters. But in order to convince both the Egyptians who had remained behind, as well as the Israelites, of Pharaoh's death, Allah commanded the waves to cast his body, first on the western and then on the eastern shore of the Red Sea.

But now Moses had no less to contend against the Israelites than formerly against Pharaoh; for they seemed unable to tear themselves from the service of idols, notwithstanding all the wonders of the only Lord, which he had performed.

Yet as long as he tarried with them they presumed not to demand an idol; but when Allah called him to himself on Mount Sinai, they threatened Aaron, whom he had left behind as his representative, with death, if he would not give them an idol.

Samiri now admonished them to bring all their gold, including even the ornaments of their women, and cast it into a copper caldron, under which a strong fire was lighted. As soon as the gold was melted, he flung into it a handful of sand, which he had taken up from under the hoof of Gabriel's horse, and lo! there was formed out of it a calf, which ran up and down like a natural one.

"Here is your Lord, and the Lord of Moses!" then cried Samiri; "this God we will worship!"

While the Israelites, notwithstanding the admonition of Aaron, had abandoned Allah, the angel Gabriel uplifted Moses so high into the heavens that he heard the scribbling of the Kalam which had just received the command to engrave the Decalogue for him and for his people on the eternal tablets of Fate.

But the higher Moses rose, the stronger grew his desire to behold Allah himself in his glory.

Then commanded Allah all the angels to surround Moses, and to commence a song of praise. Moses swooned away, for he was wanting in strength both to behold these hosts of shining forms as well as to hear their thrilling voices.

But when he came to himself again, he confessed that he had asked a sinful thing, and repented. He then prayed to Allah that he would make his people the most excellent of the earth. But Allah replied, "The Kalam has already marked down as such the people of Mohammed, because they shall fight for the true faith until it cover the whole earth."

"Lord," continued Moses, "reward tenfold the good deeds of my people, and visit sin but once; let also each good intention, though not carried into effect, obtain a recompense, but pass by each evil thought unpunished."

"These are privileges," replied Allah, "accorded to those only who believe in Mohammed, in whose name even Adam prayed to me. Admonish, therefore, thy people to faith in him, for he shall rise first on the day of the resurrection from his grave, and enter into paradise at the head of all the prophets. He also shall obtain the grace of revealing to his people the commandment of the five daily prayers and the fast of Ramadhan."*

* It is well known that the Mussulmans keep a yearly fast, which lasts from sunrise to sunset for a whole month. And they even exceed the Jews in strictness, for

When Moses returned again to his own people, and found them worshipping before the golden calf, he fell upon Aaron, caught him by the beard, and was on the point of strangling him, when Aaron swore that he was innocent, and pointed out Samiri as the prime mover of this idolatry.

Moses then summoned Samiri, and would have put him to death instantly, but Allah directed that he should be sent into banishment.

Ever since that time he roams like a wild beast throughout the world; every one shuns him, and purifies the ground on which his feet have stood, and he himself, whenever he approaches men, exclaims, "Touch me not!"

Yet, before Moses expelled him from the camp of the Israelites at Allah's command, he caused the calf to be broken into pieces, and having ground it to dust, forced Samiri to defile it. It was then put into water, and given to the Israelites to drink.

After Samiri's removal, Moses prayed Allah to have mercy on his people; but Allah replied: "I cannot pardon them, for sin yet dwells in their inward parts, and will only be washed away by the potion which thou hast given them."

On returning to the camp, Moses heard woeful shriekings. Many of the Israelites, with ghastly faces and with bodies frightfully swollen, cast themselves down before him, and cried, "Moses, help us! the golden calf is tearing our vitals; we will repent, and die cheerfully, if Allah will but pardon our sin." Many really repented of their sins; but from others only pain and the fear of death had extorted these expressions of repentance.

Moses commanded them, therefore, in the name of Allah, to slay each other.

Then there rose a darkness, like unto that which Allah had sent upon Pharaoh. The innocent and reclaimed hewed with the sword to the right and to the left, so that many slew their nearest kinsmen; but Allah gave their swords power over the guilty only. Seventy thousand worshippers of idols had already fallen, when Moses, moved by the cries of women and children, implored God once more for mercy.

Instantly the heavens grew clear, the sword rested, and all the remaining sick were healed.

On the following day, Moses read unto them the Law, and admonished them to obey scrupulously its prescriptions. But many of the people exclaimed, "We shall not submit to such a code." The laws especially obnoxious to them were those which regulated the revenge of

they not only take neither meat nor drink, but also abstain from smoking during the fast. As their year is lunar, the month of Ramadhan falls at every season of the year.

blood, and punished the pettiest theft with the loss of the hand. At that instant, Mount Sinai became vaulted over their heads, excluding the very light of heaven from them, and there cried a voice from the rocks: "Sons of Israel, Allah has redeemed you from Egypt merely to be the bearers of his laws: if you refuse this burden, we shall fall in upon you, and thus you shall be compelled to support a weightier mass until the day of the resurrection."

With one voice they then exclaimed: "We are ready to submit to the Law, and to accept it as the rule of our life."

When Moses had instructed them fully in the Law, and had expounded what was pure and what impure, what lawful and what unlawful, he gave the signal to march for the conquest of the promised land of Palestine.

But, notwithstanding all the wonders of Allah, who fed them in the wilderness with manna and quails, and who caused twelve fresh fountains to spring out of the rocky ground wherever they encamped, they were still faint-hearted, and would not depart until they had through spies obtained better information respecting the country and its inhabitants.

Moses was obliged to yield, and sent a man out of every tribe into Palestine.

The spies, on their return, related. "We have seen the land which we are to subdue by the sword; it is good and fruitful.

"The strongest camel is scarcely able to carry one single bunch of grapes; a single ear yields sufficient corn to satisfy a whole family, and the shell of a pomegranate can easily contain five armed men.

"But the inhabitants of that country and their cities are of a size proportionate to the products of their soil. We have seen men the smallest of whom was six hundred cubits high. They stared at our dwarfish appearance, and derided us. Their houses naturally correspond with their size, and the walls which surround their cities are so high that an eagle is scarcely able to soar to the summit thereof."

When the spies had finished their report, they dropped down dead; only two of them, Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, who had kept silence, remained alive. But the Israelites murmured against Moses and said: "We shall never fight against such a gigantic people. If thou hast a mind to do so, march alone with thy God against them."

Thereupon Moses announced to them, in the name of Allah, that by reason of their distrust in the help of Him who had divided the sea for their safety, they were doomed to wander forty years through the wilderness. He then took leave of them, and journeyed, preaching the true faith through the whole earth from east to west, and from north to south.

When Moses was one day boasting of his wisdom to his servant Joshua, who accompanied him, Allah said: "Go to the Persian Gulf, where the seas of the Greeks and the Persians commingle, and thou shalt there find one of my pious servants who surpasses thee in wisdom."

"How shall I recognize this wise man?"

"Take with thee a fish in a basket; it will show thee where my servant lives."

Moses now departed with Joshua toward the country which Allah had pointed out, and constantly carried with him a fish in a basket. On one occasion he laid himself down, quite exhausted, on the seashore, and fell asleep. It was late when he awoke, and he hurried on to reach the desired inn; but Joshua had, in his haste, neglected to take the fish with him, and Moses forgot to remind him of it. It was not until the next morning that they missed their fish, and were on the point of returning to the spot where they had rested on the preceding day, but, on reaching the seashore, they beheld a fish gliding quite erect on the surface of the water, instead of swimming therein, as fish are wont to do; they soon recognized it as theirs, and therefore went after it along the shore. After having, for a few hours, followed their guide, it suddenly dived below: they stood still, and thought, "Here the God-fearing man whom we are seeking must dwell"; and soon they descried a cave, over the entrance of which was written, "In the name of Allah, the All-merciful and All-gracious." On stepping in, they found a man who appeared in all the bloom and vigor of a youth of seventeen, but with a snow-white beard flowing even to his feet. It was the prophet Al Chidhr, who, though gifted with eternal youth, was withal endowed with the finest ornament of hoary age.

After mutual salutation, Moses said: "Accept me as thy disciple, and permit me to accompany thee in thy wanderings through the world, that I may admire the wisdom which Allah has bestowed on thee."

"Thou canst not comprehend it, and wilt therefore not remain long with me."

"If Allah pleases, thou shalt find me both obedient and patient. Reject me not!"

"Thou mayest follow me, yet must thou ask me no question until I shall, of my own accord, explain my actions."

When Moses had submitted to this condition, Al Chidhr took him to the shore of the sea, where a vessel was lying at anchor. He took an axe and struck out two planks of the vessel, so that it sank immediately.

"What dost thou?" cried Moses; "the men that are in it will now perish."

"Did I not say," replied Al Chidhr, "thou wilt not long continue patiently with me?"

"Pardon me," said Moses; "I had forgotten my promise."

Al Chidhr then journeyed farther with him, until they met a beautiful boy, who was playing with shells on the seashore. Al Chidhr drew his knife, and cut the throat of the child.

Moses cried, "Why murderest thou an innocent child, who can in no wise have deserved death? Thou hast committed a great crime!"

"Did I not tell thee," replied Al Chidhr, "thou canst not travel long in my company?"

"Pardon me yet this once," replied Moses; "and if I inquire again, then mayest thou reject me!"

They now traveled long, to and fro, until they arrived, weary and hungry, in a large city. Yet no one would lodge them, nor give them meat or drink, without money. Suddenly Al Chidhr beheld how the walls of a beautiful inn, out of which they had just been driven, threatened to fall in; he then stepped before them, and supported them until they stood upright again; and when he had strengthened them, he went his way.

Then said Moses to him: "Thou hast now performed a work which would have occupied many masons during several days; why hast thou not at least demanded a reward, that we might have bought some provisions?"

"Now we must separate," said Al Chidhr; "yet, ere we part, I will explain to thee the motives of my conduct. The vessel which I have damaged, but which may be easily repaired, belonged to poor men, and formed their only source of maintenance. At the time I struck it, many ships of a certain tyrant were cruising in those seas, capturing every serviceable craft. By me, therefore, these poor sailors have saved their only property.

"The child whom I have slain is the son of pious parents; but he himself (I perceived it in his face) was of a depraved nature, and would, in the end, have led his parents into evil. I have therefore preferred to slay him; Allah will give them pious children in his stead.

"As for the wall of the inn which I have raised up and strengthened, it belongs to two orphans whose father was a pious man. Beneath the wall there is a treasure hid, which the present owner would have claimed if it had fallen; I have therefore repaired it, that the treasure may be left secure until the children shall have grown up.

"Thou seest, then," continued Al Chidhr, "that in all this I have not followed blind passion, but have acted according to the will of my Lord."

Moses prayed Al Chidhr once more to pardon him, but did not venture to ask permission to remain with him.

During the last thirty years Moses had passed through the southern, eastern, and western parts of the earth, and there were yet left to him

ten years for wandering in the north, which, notwithstanding the ferocity of the nations of that region, and the rigidity of its climate, he visited in every direction until he came to the great iron wall which Alexander had erected to protect the inhabitants against the predatory incursions of the nations of Jadjudj and Madjudj. After he had admired this wall, which is cast in one piece, he praised the omnipotence of Allah, and retraced his steps toward the Arabian desert.

Nine-and-thirty years had already elapsed since he had separated from his brethren. Most of the Israelites whom he had left in their prime had meanwhile died, and another generation had risen in their stead.

Among the few aged men who yet remained was his kinsman Karun (Korah), Ibn Jachar, Ibn Fahitz. He had learned from Moses's sister, Kolthum (Miriam), who was his wife, the science of alchemy, so that he was able to convert the meanest metal into gold. He was so rich that he built lofty walls of gold round his gardens, and required forty mules to carry the keys of his treasures when he traveled. By means of his wealth he had succeeded in acquiring a truly regal influence during Moses's absence. But when, at Moses's return, his importance diminished, he resolved on his destruction. He therefore visited a maiden whom Moses had banished from the camp on account of her abandoned courses, and promised to marry her if she would declare before the elders of the congregation that Moses had expelled her only because she had refused to listen to his evil words. She promised Korah to act entirely after his will. But when she arrived before the elders with the intention of calumniating Moses, she was not able to prefer her charge. Allah put different words into her mouth: she acknowledged her guilt, and confessed that Korah had induced her, by innumerable promises, to bring a false accusation against Moses. Moses prayed to Allah for protection against the malignity of his kinsman; and lo! the earth opened under the feet of Korah, and devoured him, with all his associates and goods.

As the fortieth year was hastening to its close, Moses marched with the Israelites toward the frontier of Palestine.

But when Jalub Ibn Safum, the king of Balka, received intelligence of the approach of the Israelites, who had already, in their march, conquered many cities, he called to him Beliam, the sorcerer, the son of Baur, in hopes to be enabled, by his counsel and aid, to withstand the Israelites. But an angel appeared to Beliam in the night, and forbade him to accept the invitation of Jalub. When, therefore, the messengers of the king returned to Balka without Beliam, Jalub purchased the most costly jewels, and sent them secretly by other messengers to Beliam's wife, to whom the sorcerer was so much attached as to be quite under

her control. Beliam's wife accepted the presents, and persuaded her husband to undertake the journey. The king, accompanied by his viziers, rode out some distance to meet him, and appointed one of the most beautiful houses of the city for his abode. According to the custom of the country, the guest was served for three days from the royal tables, and the viziers visited him from time to time, without speaking, however, of the object for which he had been called to Balka. It was not until the fourth day that he was summoned to the king, and entreated to curse the people of Israel. But Allah paralyzed the tongue of Beliam, so that, notwithstanding his hatred toward the people, he was not able to utter a word of imprecation.

When the king saw this, he prayed him at least to assist with his counsel against the invading nation.

"The best means against the Israelites," said Beliam, "who are so terrible only through the assistance of Allah, is to lead them into sin. Their God then forsakes them, and they are unable to resist any foe. Send, therefore, the most beautiful women and maidens of the capital to meet them with provisions, that they may yield to sin, and then thou shalt easily overcome them."

The king adopted this counsel; but Moses was apprised thereof by the angel Gabriel, and caused the first Israelite who was led into sin to be put to death, and as a warning commanded his head to be carried on a spear throughout the camp. He then instantly led on the attack: Balka was taken, and the king, with Beliam and his sons, were the first to perish in the fight. Soon after the conquest of Balka, Gabriel appeared, and commanded Moses, together with Aaron and his sons, to follow him to a lofty mountain which lay near the city. On reaching the pinnacle of the mountain they beheld a finely-wrought cave, in the midst of which there stood a coffin, with the inscription, "I am destined for him whom I fit." Moses desired to lay himself first into it, but his feet protruded; then Aaron placed himself in it, and behold, it fitted him as if his measure had been taken. Gabriel then led Moses, and Aaron's sons beyond the cave, but he himself returned to wash and to bless Aaron, whose soul had meanwhile been taken by the Angel of Death. When Moses returned to the camp without Aaron, and announced his death to the Israelites who inquired for his brother, he was suspected of having murdered him; many, even, were not afraid to proclaim their suspicions in public. Moses prayed to Allah to manifest his innocence in the presence of all the people, and behold, four angels brought Aaron's coffin from the cave, and raised it above the camp of the Israelites, so that every one could see him, and one of the angels exclaimed: "Allah has taken Aaron's soul to himself." Moses, who now anticipated his approaching end, pronounced a long discourse before the Israelites, in

which he enforced on them the most important laws. At the close, he warned them against falsifying the Law, which had been revealed to them, and in which the future appearance of Mohammed, in whom they were all to believe, was quite clearly announced. A few days after, while he was reading in the Law, the Angel of Death visited him. Moses said: "If thou be commanded to receive my soul, take it from my mouth, for it was constantly occupied with the word of Allah, and has not been touched by any unclean thing." He then put on his most beautiful robes, appointed Joshua his successor, and died at an age of one hundred and twenty, or, as some of the learned maintain, of one hundred and eighty years. The mercy of Allah be with him!

Others relate the particulars of Moses's death as follows: When Gabriel announced to him his approaching dissolution, he ran hurriedly to his dwelling, and knocked hastily at the door. His wife, Safurija, opened it, and beholding him quite pale, and with ruffled countenance, inquired: "Who pursueth thee, that thou runnest hither in terror and lookest dismayed? Who is it that pursueth thee for debt?"

Then Moses answered, "Is there a mightier creditor than the Lord of heaven and earth, or a more dangerous pursuer than the Angel of Death?"

"Shall, then, a man who has spoken with Allah die?"

"Assuredly, even the angel Gabriel shall be delivered to death, and Michael and Israfil, with all other angels. Allah alone is eternal, and never dies."

Safurija wept until she swooned away; but when she came to herself, Moses inquired, "Where are my children?"

"They are asleep."

"Awake them that I may bid them a last farewell."

Safurija went before the couch of her children, and cried, "Rise, ye poor orphans; rise, and take leave of your father, for this day is his last in this world and his first in the next."

The children started from their sleep in affright, and cried, "Woe unto us! who will have compassion upon us when we shall be fatherless? Who will with solicitude and affection step over our threshold?"

Moses was so moved that he wept bitterly.

Then said Allah to him, "Moses, what signify these tears? Art thou afraid of death, or departest thou reluctantly from this world?"

"I fear not death, and leave this world with gladness; but I have compassion on these children, from whom their father is about to be torn."

"In whom trusted thy mother when she confided thy life to the waters?"

“ In Thee, O Lord.”

“ Who protected thee against Pharaoh, and gave thee a staff with which thou dividedst the sea ? ”

“ Thou, O Lord.”

“ Go, then, once more to the seashore, lift up thy staff over the waters, and thou shalt see another sign of my omnipotence.”

Moses followed this command, and instantly the sea was divided, and he beheld in the midst thereof a huge black rock. When he came near it, Allah cried to him: “ Smite it with thy staff.” He smote it; the rock was cleft in twain, and he saw beneath it, in a sort of cave, a worm with a green leaf in his mouth, which cried three times: “ Praised be Allah, who doth not forget me in my solitude! Praised be Allah, who hath nourished and raised me up! ” The worm was silent; and Allah said to Moses: “ Thou seest that I do not forsake the worm under the hidden rock in the sea, and how should I forsake thy children, who do even now confess that God is One, and that Moses is his prophet ? ”

Moses then returned, reproved, to his house, comforted his wife and children, and went alone to the mountain. There he found four men, who were digging a grave, and he inquired of them, “ For whom is this grave ? ” They replied, “ For a man whom Allah desires to have with him in heaven.” Moses begged permission to assist at the grave of so pious a man. When the work was done, he inquired, “ Have you taken the measure of the dead ? ” “ No,” they said, “ we have forgotten it; but he was precisely of thy form and stature: lay thyself in it, that we may see whether it will fit thee; Allah will reward thy kindness.” But when Moses had laid himself down within it, the Angel of Death stepped before him, and said, “ Peace be upon thee, Moses! ”

“ Allah bless thee, and have pity upon thee! Who art thou ? ”

“ I am the Angel of Death! Prophet of Allah, and come to receive thy soul.”

“ How wilt thou take it ? ”

“ Out of thy mouth.”

“ Thou canst not, for my mouth hath spoken with God.”

“ I will draw it out of thine eyes.”

“ Thou mayest not do so, for they have seen the light of the Lord.”

“ Well, then, I will take it out of thine ears.”

“ This also thou mayest not do, for they have heard the word of Allah.”

“ I will take it from thy hands.”

“ How darest thou? Have they not borne the diamond tablets on which the Law was engraved ? ”

Allah then commanded the Angel of Death to ask of Ridwhan, the guardian of paradise, an apple of Eden, and to present it to Moses.

Moses took the apple from the hand of the Angel of Death to inhale its fragrance, and at that instant his noble soul rose through his nostrils to heaven. But his body remained in this grave, which no one knew save Gabriel, Michael, Israfil, and Azrail, who had dug it, and whom Moses had taken for men.

SAMUEL, SAUL, AND DAVID

THE Israelites lived under Joshua (who was, however, not a prophet, but merely a virtuous prince and valiant chief) conformably to the laws revealed by Moses; the Lord therefore enabled them to expel the giants from the land of Canaan, and at their cry, "Allah is great," the loftiest walls of fortified cities fell in.

But after Joshua's death they relapsed into all those iniquities on account of which the Egyptians had been so severely punished; wherefore Allah, in order to chastise and to reclaim his people, sent the giant Djalut (Goliath) against them, who defeated them in numerous engagements, and even took from them the Tabut (the sacred ark of the Covenant), so that the protection of Allah entirely departed from them.

One day, when the heads of the people were assembled to consult in what manner the mighty Goliath might be resisted, there came a man to them of the family of Aaron: his name was Ishmawil Ibn Bal (Samuel) and said: "The God of your fathers sent me to you, to proclaim speedy help if you will turn to him, but utter destruction if you continue in your wicked courses."

"What shall we do," inquired one of the elders, "to obtain the favor of Allah?"

Samuel replied: "You shall worship Allah alone, and offer no sacrifices unto idols; nor eat that which has died of itself, nor swine's flesh, nor blood, nor anything that has not been slaughtered in the name of Allah. Assist each other in doing good, honor your parents, treat your wives with kindness, support the widow, the orphan, and the poor. Believe in the prophets that have gone before me, especially in Abraham, for whom Allah turned the burning pile into a garden of delight; in Ismael, whose neck he rendered invulnerable, and for whom he caused a fountain to spring up in the stony desert; and in Moses, who opened with his rod twelve dry paths through the sea.

"Believe, in like manner, in the prophets that shall come after me; above all, in Isa Ibn Mariam, the spirit of Allah (Christ), and in Mohammed Ibn Abd Allah."

“Who is Isa?” inquired one of the heads of Israel.

“He is the prophet,” replied Samuel, “whom the Scriptures point out as the Word of Allah. His mother shall conceive him as a virgin by the will of the Lord and the breath of the angel Gabriel. Even in the womb he shall praise the omnipotence of Allah, and testify to the purity of his mother; but at a latter period he shall heal the sick and leprous, raise the dead, and create living birds out of clay. His godless contemporaries will afflict and attempt to crucify him; but Allah shall blind them, so that another shall be crucified in his stead, while he, like the prophet Enoch, is taken up into heaven without tasting death.”

“And Mohammed, who is he?” continued the same Israelite; “his name sounds so strangely that I do not remember ever having heard it in Israel.”

“Mohammed,” Samuel replied, “does not belong to our people, but is a descendant of Ismael. His name, which signifies the ‘Much-praised-One,’ indicates of itself the many excellences for which he is blessed by all creatures, both in heaven and on earth.

“But the wonders which he shall perform are so numerous that a whole human life would not suffice to narrate them. I shall content myself, therefore, with communicating to you but a part of what he shall see in one single night.*

“In a frightfully tempestuous night, when the cock refrains from crowing, and the hound from baying, he shall be roused from his sleep by Gabriel, who frequently appears to him in human form; but who on this occasion comes as Allah created him, with his seven hundred radiant wings; between each of which is a space which the fleetest steed can scarcely traverse in five hundred years.

“He shall lead him forth to a spot where Borak, the miraculous horse, the same which Abraham used to mount on his pilgrimages from Syria to Mecca, stands ready to receive him.

“This horse also has two wings like an eagle; feet like a dromedary; a body of diamonds, which shines like the sun; and a head like the most beautiful virgin.

“On this miraculous steed, on whose forehead is engraved ‘There is no Lord but Allah, and Mohammed is his messenger,’ he is carried first to Medina, then to Sinai, to Bethlehem, and to Jerusalem, that he may pray on holy ground. From thence he ascends by a golden ladder, whose steps are of ruby, of emerald, and hyacinth, into the seventh

*The following narrative, which Samuel is made to utter, describes the Night Journey of Mohammed. He revealed it to his followers in the twelfth year of his mission; and though his Arabs were given to the marvelous, yet this staggered even their credulity, and would have proved his utter ruin but for the resolute interposition of Abu Bekr.

heaven, where he is initiated in all the mysteries of creation, and the government of the universe.

“He beholds the pious amid all their felicities in paradise, and sinners in their varied agonies in hell. Many of them are roaming there like ravenous beasts through barren fields; they are those who in this life enjoyed the bounties of Allah, and gave nothing thereof to the poor.

“Others run to and fro, carrying fresh meat in one hand, and corroded flesh in the other; but as often as they would put the former into their mouths, their hands are struck with fiery rods until they partake of the putrefied morsel. This is the punishment of those who broke their marriage vow, and found pleasure in guilty indulgences.

“The bodies of others are terribly swollen, and are still increasing in bulk: they are such as have grown rich by usury, and whose avarice was insatiable.

“The tongues and lips of others are seized and pinched with iron pincers, as the punishment of their calumnious and rebellious speeches, by which they caused so much evil in the earth.

“Midway between paradise and hell is seated Adam, the father of the human race, who smiles with joy as often as the gates of paradise are thrown open, and the triumphant cries of the blessed are borne forth, but weeps when the gates of hell are unclosed, and the sighs of the damned penetrate to his ear.

“In that night Mohammed beholds, besides Gabriel, other angels, many of whom have seventy thousand heads, each head with seventy thousand faces, each face with seventy thousand mouths, and each mouth with seventy thousand tongues, each of which praises Allah in seventy thousand languages. He sees, too, the Angel of Reconciliation, who is half fire and half ice; the angel who watches with scowling visage and flaming eyes the treasuries of fire; the Angel of Death, holding in his hand a huge tablet, inscribed with names, of which he effaces hundreds every instant; the angel who keeps the floods, and measures out with an immense balance the waters appointed unto every river and every fountain; and him, finally, who supports the throne of Allah on his shoulders, and is holding a trumpet in his mouth, whose blast shall one day wake the sleepers from the grave.

“He is at last conducted through many oceans of light, into the vicinity of the holy throne itself, which is so vast, that the rest of the universe appears by its side like the scales of a coat of armor in the boundless desert.

“That which shall be revealed to him there,” continued Samuel, “is as yet concealed from me; but this I know: He shall gaze on the glory of Allah at the distance of a bow-shot; shall then descend to earth by the ladder, and return on Borak to Mecca as rapidly as he came.

“To accomplish this vast journey, including his stay in Medina, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and in heaven, he requires so little time, that a water vase, which he overturns in rising from his couch, will not have emptied its contents at his return.”

The assembled Israelites listened attentively to Samuel, and when he had finished, they exclaimed with one voice: “We believe in Allah, and in his prophets which were and are to come; only pray that He may deliver us from the tyranny of Goliath.”

Samuel prayed and fasted till at length Allah sent an angel, who commanded him to go out of the city, and to proclaim the first man who should meet him king over Israel, since in his reign the Israelites should regain their independence from foreign bondage.

Samuel did as he was commanded, and met Talut (Saul), the son of Bishr, the son of Ahnun, the son of Benjamin, who was a husbandman of lofty stature, but not otherwise remarkable, though Allah had put much wisdom into his heart.



He was wandering about in search of a heifer which had broken away from her plow and run at large. Samuel assisted him in her recovery, and then took Saul home with him, anointed him with oil, and presented him to the heads of Israel as their king and divinely-commissioned deliverer.

But they refused to accept as their king a common peasant, who hitherto had not distinguished himself in any wise; and they demanded a miracle.

“Allah,” replied Samuel, “will, in token of his ratifying this kingly election, restore to you the ark of the covenant.”

From that day the Philistines were visited with the most painful and disgusting leprosy, whose origin no physician could discover, and which no physician could cure. But as the plague fell most heavily on that city, where the ark of the covenant, which had been carried in triumph from one place to another, happened to be, no one would retain it any longer, and it was at last left standing in a wagon in the open field.

Allah then commanded two invisible angels to carry it back into the midst of the camp of Israel, who thereupon no longer hesitated to do fealty unto Saul as their king.

As soon as he was elected, Saul mustered the host of Israel, and marched against the Philistines at the head of seventy thousand men.

During their march through the wilderness, they were one day in want of water, so that a universal murmuring arose against Samuel and Saul. Samuel, who was following after the ark of the Covenant, prayed to the Lord, and there sprung from out the rocky ground a fountain of water, which was as fresh as snow, as sweet as honey, and as white as milk. But when the soldiers came rushing toward it, Samuel cried:

“ You have grievously sinned against your king and against your God by reason of discontent and rebellion. Forbear to touch this water, that by abstinence you may atone for your sin! ”

But Samuel's words met with no regard. Only three hundred and thirteen men — as many as fought in the first engagement of the Mussulmans against the Infidels — mastered their appetite, barely refreshing themselves, while all the rest of the army yielded to the temptation, and drank in full draughts from the fountain.

When Talut beheld this, he disbanded the whole army, and, relying on the aid of Allah, marched against the enemy with the small number of his men who had conquered their desire.

Among this little band were six sons of a virtuous man whose name was Isa. Davud (David), his seventh son, had remained at home to nurse his aged father.

But when, for a long time, no engagements took place between Israel and the Philistines, since no one had accepted the challenge to single combat with Goliath, by which a general battle was to be preceded, Isa sent also his seventh son into the camp, partly to carry fresh provisions to his brothers, and partly to bring him tidings of their welfare.

On his way he heard a voice from a pebble which lay in the midst of the road, calling to him: “ Lift me up, for I am one of the stones with which the prophet Abraham drove Satan away when he would have shaken his resolve to sacrifice his son in obedience to his heavenly vision. ”

David placed the stone, which was inscribed with holy names, in the bag which he wore in his upper garment, for he was simply dressed like a traveler, and not as a soldier.

When he had proceeded a little farther, he again heard a voice from another pebble, crying: “ Take me with thee, for I am the stone which the angel Gabriel struck out from the ground with his foot when he caused a fountain to gush forth in the wilderness for Ismael's sake. ”

David took this stone also, and laying it beside the first, went on his way. But soon he heard the following words proceeding from a third stone: “ Lift me up, for I am the stone with which Jacob fought against the angels which his brother Esau had sent out against him. ”

David took this stone likewise, and continued his journey without interruption until he came to his brothers in the camp of Israel. On his arrival there, he heard a herald proclaim: “ Whoever puts the giant Goliath to death shall become Saul's son-in-law, and succeed hereafter to his throne. ”

David sought to persuade his brothers to venture the combat with Goliath, not to become the king's son-in-law and successor, but to wipe off the reproach that rested on their people.

But, since courage and confidence failed them, he went to Saul, and offered to accept the giant's challenge. The king had but little hopes indeed that a tender youth, such as David then was, would defeat a warrior like Goliath; yet he permitted the combat to take place, for he believed that even if he should fall, his reproachful example would excite some others to imitate his heroic conduct.

On the following morning, when Goliath, as usual, challenged with proud speech the warriors of Israel, David, in his traveling apparel, and with his bag containing the three stones, stepped down into the arena. Goliath laughed aloud on seeing his youthful antagonist, and said to him: "Rather hie thee home to play with lads of thine own years. How wilt thou fight with me, seeing that thou art even unarmed?"

David replied: "Thou art as a dog unto me, whom one may best drive away with a stone"; and before Goliath was yet able to draw his sword from its scabbard, he took the three stones from his bag, pierced the giant with one of them, so that he instantly fell lifeless on the ground, and drove with the second the right wing of the Philistines into flight, and their left wing with the third.

But Saul was jealous of David, whom all Israel extolled as their greatest hero, and refused to give him his daughter until he brought the heads of a hundred giants as the marriage gift. But the greater David's achievements were, the more rancorous grew the envy of Saul, so that he even sought treacherously to slay him. David defeated all his plans; but he never revenged himself, and Saul's hatred waxed greater by reason of his very magnanimity.

One day he visited his daughter in David's absence, and threatened to put her to death unless she gave him a promise, and confirmed it by the most sacred oaths, that she would deliver her husband unto him during the night.

When the latter returned home, his wife met him in alarm, and related what had happened between her and her father. David said to her: "Be faithful to thine oath, and open the door of my chamber to thy father as soon as I shall be asleep. Allah will protect me even in my sleep, and give me the means of rendering Saul's sword harmless, even as Abraham's weapon was impotent against Ismael, who yielded his neck to the slaughter."

He then went into his forge, and prepared a coat of mail, which covered the whole upper part of his body from his neck downward. This coat was as fine as a hair, and, clinging to him like silk, resisted every kind of weapon; for David had been endowed, as a special favor from Allah, with the power of melting iron without fire, and of fashioning it like wax for every conceivable purpose, with no instrument but his hand.

To him we are indebted for the ringed coat of mail, for up to his time armor consisted of simple iron plates.

David was wrapped in the most peaceful slumber, when Saul, guided by his daughter, entered his chamber; and it was not until his father-in-law haggled the impenetrable mail with his sword as with a saw, bearing on it with all his strength, that David awoke, tore the sword from his hand, and broke it in pieces as if it had been a morsel of bread.

But after this occurrence, he thought it no longer advisable to tarry with Saul, and therefore retired to the mountains, with a few of his friends and adherents. Saul made use of this pretext to have him suspected of the people, and at last, accusing him of treason, marched against him at the head of one thousand soldiers. But David was so endeared to the inhabitants of the mountain, and knew its hiding-places so well, that it was impossible for Saul to take him.

One night, while Saul was asleep, David left a cave which was quite near to the king's encampment, and took the signet ring from his finger, together with his arms and a standard which were lying by his side. He then retreated through the cave, which had a double entrance, and the next morning appeared on the pinnacle of a mountain which stood opposite to the camp of the Israelites, having girt on Saul's huge sword, and waving his standard up and down, and stretching out his finger on which he had placed the king's ring.

Saul, who could not understand how a thief could have penetrated into the midst of his well-guarded camp, recognized David and the articles which had been taken from him. This new proof of his dexterity and magnanimous disposition overcame at last the king's envy and displeasure; he therefore dispatched a messenger, who in the royal name begged forgiveness for all the grievances he had inflicted, and invited David to return to his home.

David was overjoyed at a reconciliation with his father-in-law, and they now lived together in peace and harmony until Saul was slain, in a disastrous engagement with the Philistines.

After Saul's death, David was unanimously elected King of Israel, and by the help of Allah he soon reconquered the Philistines, and extended the boundaries of his kingdom far and wide.

But David was not only a brave warrior and a wise king, but likewise a great prophet. Allah revealed to him seventy psalms, and endowed him with a voice such as no mortal possessed before him. In height and depth, in power and melody combined, no human voice had ever equaled it. He could imitate the thunders of heaven and the roar of the lion as well as the delicious notes of the nightingale; nor was there any other musician or singer in Israel as long as David lived, because no one who had once heard him could take pleasure in any other

performance. Every third day he prayed with the congregation, and sung the psalms in a chapel which was hewn out of the mountain rocks. Then not only all men assembled to hear him, but even beasts and birds came from afar, attracted by his wonderful song.

One day, as he was on his return from prayer, he heard two of his subjects contending which of the two was the greater prophet, Abraham or himself. "Was not Abraham," said the one, "saved from the burning pile?" "Has not David," replied the other, "slain the giant Djalut?" "But what has David achieved," resumed the first, "that might be compared with Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son?"

As soon as David came home, he fell down before Allah and prayed: "Lord, who hast proved on the pile Abraham's fidelity and obedience, grant unto me, too, an opportunity to show unto my people that my love to thee withstands every temptation."

David's prayer was heard; when, three days afterward, he ascended his pulpit, he perceived a bird of such beautiful plumage that it attracted his whole attention, and he followed it with his eyes to every corner of the chapel, and to the trees and shrubs beyond. He sung fewer psalms than he was wont to do; his voice failed him as often as he lost sight of this graceful bird, and grew soft and playful in the most solemn parts of the worship whenever it reappeared.

At the close of the prayers, which to the astonishment of the whole assembly, were concluded on this occasion several hours sooner than usual, he followed the bird, which flew from tree to tree, until he found himself, at sunset, on the margin of a little lake. The bird disappeared in the lake, but David soon forgot it; for in its stead there arose a female form, whose beauty dazzled him like the clearest midday sun. He inquired her name: it was Saja, the daughter of Josu, the wife of Uriah Ibn Haman, who was with the army. David departed, and on his return commanded the chief of his troops to appoint Uriah to the most dangerous post in the vanguard of the army. His command was executed, and soon afterward the death of Uriah was reported. David then wooed his widow, and married her at the expiration of the prescribed time.

On the day after his marriage there appeared, at Allah's command, Gabriel and Michael in human form before David, and Gabriel said: "The man whom thou seest here before thee is the owner of ninety-nine sheep, while I possess an only one; nevertheless, he pursues me without ceasing, and demands that I should give up my only sheep to him."

"Thy demand is unreasonable," said David, "and betrays an unbelieving heart and a rude disposition."

But Gabriel interrupted him, saying, "Many a noble and accomplished *believer* permits himself more unjust things than this."

David now perceived this to be an allusion to his conduct toward Uriah; and, filled with wrath, he grasped his sword, and would have plunged it into Gabriel; but Michael gave a loud laugh of scorn, and when Gabriel and himself had ascended above David's head on their angels' wings, he said to David: "Thou hast pronounced thine own sentence, and called thine act that of a barbarous infidel: Allah will therefore bestow upon thy son a portion of the power which he had originally intended for thee. Thy guilt is so much the greater, since thou prayedst that thou mightst be led unto temptation without having the power of resisting it."

At these words the angels vanished through the ceiling; but David felt the whole burden of his sin. He tore the crown from his head, and the royal purple from his body, and wandered through the wilderness wrapped in simple woolen garments, and pining with remorse, weeping so bitterly that his skin fell from his face, and that the angels in heaven had compassion on him, and implored for him the mercy of Allah. But it was not until he had spent three full years in penitence and contrition that he heard a voice from heaven, which announced to him that the All-compassionate Allah had at length opened the gate of Mercy. Pacified and strengthened by these words of consolation, David soon recovered his physical powers and his blooming appearance, so that on his return to Palestine no one observed in him the slightest change.

But, during the king's long absence, many of the rabble, whom he had banished, gathered round his son Absalom, and made him king over Israel. He was therefore compelled, as Absalom would not renounce the throne, to make war against him. But no engagement took place; for when the prince was about to join his forces, Allah commanded the Angel of Death to take him from his horse and hang him on a tree, by his long hair, that to all future time rebellious sons might take warning by his fate. Absalom remained hanging there until one of David's chieftains passed by and slew him with the sword. But, although David soon came to be esteemed and beloved by his people, as before, yet, mindful of what had taken place with the two angels, he ventured not again to execute judgment. He had already nominated a kadhi, who was to adjust in his stead all disputes that might arise, when the angel Gabriel brought him an iron tube with a bell, and said, "Allah has beheld thy diffidence with pleasure, and therefore sends thee this tube and bell, by means of which it will be easy for thee to maintain the law in Israel, and never to pronounce an unjust sentence. Suspend this tube in thy hall of judgment, and hang the bell in the midst thereof; place the accuser on one side of it and the accused on the other, and always pro-

nounce judgment in favor of him who, on touching the tube, elicits a sound from the bell." David was greatly delighted at this gift, by means of which he who was in the right was sure to triumph; so that soon no one dared to commit any injustice, since he was certain to be detected by the bell.

One day, however, there came two men before the judgment seat, one of whom maintained that he had given a pearl into the keeping of the other, who now refused to restore it. The defendant, on the other hand, swore that he had already given it back. As usual, David compelled them both, one after the other, to touch the tube; but the bell uttered no sound, so that he did not know which of the two spoke truth, and was inclined to doubt the further virtue of the bell. But when he had repeatedly directed both to touch the tube, he observed that as often as the accused was to pass the ordeal, he gave his staff to be holden by his antagonist. David now took the staff in his own hand, and sent the accused once more to touch the tube, when instantly the bell began to ring aloud. David then caused the staff to be inspected, and behold, it was hollow, and the pearl in question was concealed within it. But on account of his thus doubting the value of the tube which Allah had given to him, it was again removed to heaven, so that David frequently erred in his decisions until Solomon, whom his wife Saja, the daughter of Josu, had borne him, aided him with his counsel. In him David placed implicit confidence, and was guided by him in the most difficult questions, for he had heard in the night of his birth the angel Gabriel exclaim: "Satan's dominion is drawing to its close, for this night a child is born, to whom Iblis and all his hosts, together with all his descendants, shall be subject. The earth, air, and water, with all the creatures that live therein, shall be his servants; he shall be gifted with nine-tenths of all the wisdom and knowledge which Allah has granted unto mankind, and understand not only all the languages of men, but those also of beasts and of birds."

One day — Solomon was then scarcely thirteen years of age — there appeared two men before the tribunal, the novelty of whose case excited the astonishment of all present, and even greatly confounded David. The accuser had bought some property of the other, and in clearing out a cellar, had found a treasure. He now demanded that the accused should give up the treasure, since he had bought the property without it; while the other maintained that the accuser possessed no right to the treasure, since he had known nothing of it, and had sold the property with all that it contained. After long meditation, David adjudged that the treasure should be divided between them. But Solomon inquired of the accuser whether he had a son, and when he replied that he had a son, he inquired of the other if he had a daughter,

and he also answering in the affirmative, Solomon said: "If you will adjust your strife so as not to do injustice one to the other, unite your children in marriage, and give them this treasure as their dowry."

On another occasion, there came a husbandman and accused a shepherd whose flock had pastured on the grain of his field. David sentenced the shepherd to give part of his flock in restitution to the husbandman; but Solomon disapproved of this judgment, and said: "Let the shepherd give up to the husbandman the use of his flock, their work, their milk, and their young ones, until the field shall be restored to the condition in which it was at the time of the flock's breaking in, when the sheep shall once more return to their owner."

David, however, one day observed that the high tribunal over which he presided beheld with displeasure the interference of Solomon in their transactions, although they were obliged to confess that his views were always better than their own. The king therefore demanded of them to examine Solomon, in the face of all the great and noble men of his kingdom, in all the doctrines and laws of Moses. "If you have satisfied yourselves," he added, "that my son knows these perfectly, and consequently never pronounces an unjust judgment, you must not slight him by reason of his youth, if his views regarding the application of the law often differ from mine and yours. Allah bestows wisdom on whomsoever he pleaseth."

The lawyers were indeed persuaded of Solomon's erudition; nevertheless, hoping to confound him by all manner of subtle questions, and thus to increase their own importance, they accepted David's proposal, and made arrangements for a public examination. But their expectations were disappointed; for, before the last word of any question put to Solomon was yet pronounced, he had already given a striking answer, so that all present firmly believed that the whole matter had been arranged beforehand with his judges, and that this examination was instituted by David merely to recommend Solomon as his worthy successor to the throne. But Solomon at once effaced this suspicion, when, at the close of this examination he arose, and said to his judges: "You have exhausted yourselves in subtleties in the hope of manifesting your superiority over me before this great assembly; permit me now, also, to put to you a very few simple questions, the solution of which needs no manner of study, but only a little intellect and understanding. Tell me what is Everything, and what is Nothing. Who is Something, and who is less than Nothing?" Solomon waited long; and when the judge whom he had addressed was not able to answer, he said: "Allah, the Creator, is Everything, but the world, the creature, is Nothing. The believer is Something, but the hypocrite is less than Nothing." Turning to another, Solomon inquired: "Which are the most in number, and

which the fewest? What is sweetest, and what most bitter?" but as the second judge also was unable to find a proper answer to these questions, Solomon said: "The most numerous are the doubters, and they who possess a perfect assurance of faith are the fewest in number. The sweetest is the possession of a virtuous wife, excellent children, and a respectable competency; but a wicked wife, undutiful children, and poverty are the most bitter." Finally, Solomon put the following questions to a third judge: "Which is the vilest, and which the most beautiful? What the most certain, and what the least so?" But these questions also remained unanswered until Solomon said, "The vilest thing is when a believer apostatizes, and the most beautiful when a sinner repents. The most certain thing is Death and the Last Judgment, and the most uncertain, Life, and the Fate of the Soul after the resurrection. You perceive," he then continued, "it is not the oldest and most learned that are always the wisest. True wisdom is neither of years nor of learned books, but only of Allah, the All-wise."

Solomon excited by his words the greatest astonishment in all that were present; and the heads of the people exclaimed with one voice: "Blessed be the Lord, who has given to our king a son who in wisdom surpasses all the men of his time, and who is worthy one day to sit on the throne of his father!"

David, in like manner, thanked Allah for the grace which he had shown to him in Solomon, and now only desired, before his death, to meet with his future companion in paradise.

"Thy request is granted!" cried a voice from heaven; "but thou must go and seek him alone; and, in order to reach his presence, thou must renounce thy earthly pomp, and wander as a poor pilgrim through the world."

The next day David nominated Solomon as his representative, laid aside his royal robes, wrapped himself round with a simple woolen garment, put on his sandals, took a staff in his hand, and left his palace. He now wandered from city to city, and from village to village, inquiring everywhere for such of the inhabitants as were most distinguished for piety, and endeavoring to make their acquaintance; but for many weeks he found no one whom he had reason to consider as his destined companion in the life to come.

One day, on reaching a village on the shores of the Mediterranean Ocean, there arrived at the same time with him a poorly-clad aged man, who was carrying a heavy burden of wood on his head. The appearance of the hoary man was so venerable, that David followed him to see where he lived. But he entered into no house at all, and sold his wood to a merchant who stood at the door of his warehouse, then gave to a poor man who begged him for alms the half of the little money which

he had earned, bought with the rest a small loaf of bread, of which also he gave a large portion to a blind woman, who implored the compassion of the faithful, and then returned on his way to the mountain whence he had come. "This man," thought David, "might well be my companion in paradise; for his venerable appearance, and the actions which I have just witnessed, testify to a rare piety. I must therefore seek to become better acquainted with him." He then followed the aged man at some distance, until, after a march of several hours over steep mountains, crossed by deep ravines, the latter entered into a cave, which admitted the light of heaven through a crevice of the rock. David remained standing at the entrance of the cave, and heard the hermit pray fervently, and then read the Law and the psalms, until the sun had set. He then lighted a lamp, and pronounced the evening prayer, drew from his bag the bread which he had bought, and consumed about half thereof.

David, who had hitherto not ventured to disturb the man in his devotions, now stepped into the cave and greeted him.

"Who art thou?" said the other, after having returned the salutation; "for, save the God-fearing Mata Ibn Juhanna, King David's future companion in paradise, I never saw any human being in these regions."

David gave his name, and begged for further particulars respecting Mata.

But the hermit replied: "I am not permitted to point out to thee his dwelling; but if thou searchest this mountain with attention, it cannot escape thee."

David now wandered up and down for a long time without finding any traces of Mata. He was on the point of returning to the hermit, in hopes of obtaining better directions, when, on an eminence, in the midst of the rocky ground, he discovered a spot which was quite moist and soft. "How singular," thought he, "that just here, on this pinnacle of a mountain, the ground should thus be moistened! Surely there can be no fountain here!" While he was thus standing, absorbed in thought respecting this remarkable phenomenon, there descended on the other side of the mountain a man who was more like an angel than a human being; his looks were cast down to the earth, so that he did not observe David; but on the moistened spot he stood still, and prayed with such fervency that his tears gushed like streams from his eyes. David now understood how it came to pass that the earth was so soaked, and he thought, "A man who thus worships his God may well be my companion in paradise." But he presumed not to address him till he heard how, among other things, he prayed: "My God, pardon the sin of King David, and preserve him from further transgression! Be merciful to him for my sake, since thou hast destined me to be his companion in paradise."

David now went toward him, but on reaching his presence he was dead.

He dug up the soft earth with his staff, washed him with the water that remained in his bottle, buried him, and pronounced over him the prayer of death. He then returned to his capital, and found in his harem the Angel of Death, who received him with the words, "Allah has granted unto thee thy request, but now thy life is ended."

"God's will be done!" replied David, and fell lifeless to the earth.

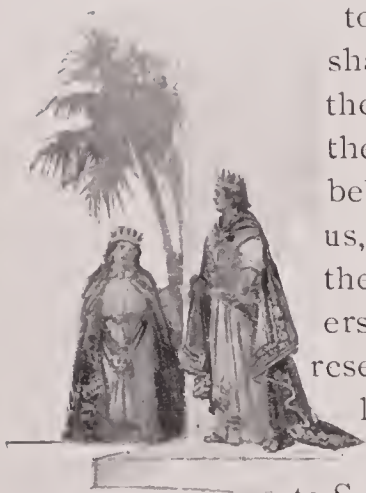
Gabriel then descended to comfort Solomon, and to bring to him a heavenly robe, in which he was to wrap his father. All Israel followed his remains to the entrance of the cave where Abraham lies buried.

SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SABA

AFTER Solomon had paid the last honors to his father, he was resting in a valley between Hebron and Jerusalem, when suddenly he swooned away. On reviving, there appeared to him eight angels, each of whom had immeasurable wings of every color and form, and thrie they bowed down to him. "Who are you?" demanded Solomon, while his eyes were yet half closed. They replied: "We are the angels set over the eight winds. Allah, our Creator and thine, sends us to swear fealty, and to surrender to thee the power over us and the eight winds which are at our command. According to thy pleasure and designs, they shall be either tempestuous or gentle, and shall blow from that quarter

to which thou shalt turn thy back; and at thy demand they shall rise out of the earth to bear thee up and to raise thee above the loftiest mountains." The most exalted of the eight angels then presented to him a jewel with this inscription, "To Allah belong greatness and might"; and said, "If thou hast need of us, raise this stone toward heaven, and we shall appear to serve thee." As soon as the angels had left him, there came four others, differing from each other in form and name. One of them resembled an immense whale; the second, an eagle; the third, a lion; and the fourth, a serpent. "We are the lords of all creatures living in earth and water," they said, bowing profoundly

to Solomon, "and appear before thee at the command of our Lord, to do fealty unto thee. Dispose of us at thy pleasure. We grant to thee and to thy friends all the good and pleasant things with which the Creator has endowed us, but use all the noxious that are in our power against thy foes." The angel who represented the kingdom of birds then gave to him a jewel with the inscription, "All created things praise the Lord"; and



said, "By virtue of this stone, which thou needest only to raise above thy head, thou mayest call us at any moment, and impart to us thy commands." Solomon did so instantly, and commanded them to bring a pair of every kind of animal that lives in the water, the earth, and the air, and to present them to him. The angels departed quick as lightning, and in the twinkling of an eye there were standing before him every imaginable creature, from the largest elephant down to the smallest worm; also all kinds of fishes and birds. Solomon caused each of them to describe its whole manner of life; he listened to their complaints, and abolished many of their abuses. But he conversed longest with the birds, both on account of their exquisite language, which he knew as well as his own, and also for the beautiful proverbs that are current among them. The song of the peacock, translated into human language, means, "As thou judgest, so shalt thou be judged." The song of the nightingale signifies, "Contentment is the greatest happiness." The turtledove sings, "It were better for many a creature had it never been born." The hoopoo, "He that shows no mercy shall not obtain mercy." The bird syrdaak, "Turn to Allah, O ye sinners." The swallow, "Do good, for you shall be rewarded hereafter." The pelican, "Blessed be Allah in heaven and earth!" The dove, "All things pass away; Allah alone is eternal." The kata, "Whosoever can keep silence goes through life most securely." The eagle, "Let our life be ever so long, yet it must end in death." The raven, "The farther from mankind, the pleasanter." The cock, "Ye thoughtless men, remember your Creator."

Solomon chose the cock and the hoopoo for his constant attendants. The one, on account of his monitory sentence, and the other, inasmuch as his eyes, piercing as they do through the earth as if it were crystal, enabled him during the travels of the king to point out the places where fountains of water were hid, so that water never failed Solomon, either to quench his thirst or to perform the prescribed ablutions before prayer.

After having stroked the heads of the doves, he commanded them to appoint unto their young the temple which he was about to erect as their habitation. (This pigeon pair had, in the course of a few years, increased so much, through Solomon's blessed touch, that all who visited the temple walked from the remotest quarter of the city under the shadow of their wings.)

When Solomon was again alone, there appeared an angel, whose upper part looked like earth, and whose lower part like water. He bowed down toward the earth, and said: "I am created by Allah to manifest his will both to the dry land and to the sea; but he has placed me at thy disposal, and thou mayest command, through me, over earth and sea; at thy will the highest mountains shall disappear, and others rise out of the ground; rivers and seas shall dry up, and fruitful countries be turned

into seas or oceans." He then presented to him before he vanished a jewel, with the inscription, "Heaven and earth are the servants of Allah."

Finally, another angel brought to him a fourth jewel, which bore the inscription, "There is no God but one, and Mohammed is his messenger." "By means of this stone," said the angel, "thou obtainest the dominion over the kingdom of spirits, which is much greater than that of man and beasts, and fills up the whole space between the earth and heaven. Part of these spirits," continued the angel, "believe in the only God, and pray to him; but others are unbelieving. Some adore the fire; others the sun; others, again, the different stars; and many even the water. The first continually hover round the pious, to preserve them from evil and sin; but the latter seek in every possible manner to torment and seduce them; which they do the more easily since they render themselves invisible, or assume any form they please." Solomon desired to see the genii in their original form. The angel rushed like a column of fire through the air, and soon returned with a host of demons and genii, whose appalling appearance filled Solomon, despite his dominion over them, with an inward shudder. He had no idea that there were such misshapen and frightful beings in the world. He saw human heads on the necks of horses, with asses' feet; the wings of eagles on the dromedary's back; and the horns of the gazelle on the head of the peacock. Astonished at this singular union, he prayed the angel to explain it to him, since Djan, from whom all the genii were descended, had only a simple form. "This is the consequence," replied the angel, "of their wicked lives."

When Solomon returned home, he commanded the four jewels which the angels had given him to be set in a signet ring, in order that he might be able at any moment to rule over spirits and animals, and over wind and water. His first care was to subdue the demons and genii. He caused them all to come before him save the mighty Sachr, who kept himself concealed in an unknown island of the ocean, and Iblis, the master of all evil spirits, to whom God had promised the most perfect independence till the day of judgment. When they were assembled, he stamped his signet ring on each of their necks, to mark them as his slaves. He obliged the male genii to erect various public buildings; among others, also, a temple after the plan of that at Mecca, which he had once seen during his travels to Arabia. The female genii he obliged to cook, to bake, to wash, to weave, to spin, to carry water, and to perform other domestic labors. The stuffs they produced Solomon distributed among the poor, and the food which they prepared was placed on tables of two leagues square, for the daily consumption amounted to thirty thousand oxen and as many sheep, with a great number of fowls

and fish, of which he could obtain as many as he chose by virtue of his ring, notwithstanding his remoteness from the ocean. The genii and demons sat at iron tables, the poor at tables of wood, the chiefs of the people and of the army at tables of silver, but the learned and eminently pious at golden ones, and the latter were waited on by Solomon himself.

One day, when all the spirits, men, beasts, and birds, had risen, satisfied, from their various tables, Solomon prayed to Allah that he might permit him to entertain all the creatures of the earth.

"Thou demandest an impossibility," replied Allah; "but make a beginning to-morrow with the inhabitants of the sea."

Solomon thereupon commanded the genii to load with corn one hundred thousand camels and as many mules, and to lead them to the sea-shore. He himself followed, and cried: "Come hither ye inhabitants of the sea, that I may satisfy your hunger." Then came all kinds of fish to the surface of the sea. Solomon flung corn unto them till they were satisfied, and dived down again. On a sudden a whale protruded his head, resembling a mighty mountain. Solomon made his flying spirits to pour one sack of corn after the other into its jaws; but it continued its demand for more, until not a single grain was left. Then it bellowed aloud: "Feed me, Solomon, for I never suffered so much from hunger as to-day."

Solomon inquired of it whether there were more fish of the kind in the sea.

"There are of my species alone," replied the whale, "seventy thousand kinds, the least of which is so large that thou wouldst appear in its body like a grain of sand in the wilderness."

Solomon threw himself on the ground, and began to weep, and besought the Lord to pardon his senseless demand.

"My kingdom," cried Allah to him, "is still greater than thine; arise, and behold but one of those creatures whose rule I cannot confide to man."

Then the sea began to rage and to storm, as if all the eight winds had set it in motion at once; and there rose up a sea monster so huge that it could easily have swallowed seventy thousand like the first, which Solomon was not able to satisfy, and cried with a voice like the most terrible thunder: "Praised be Allah, who alone has the power to save me from starvation!"

When Solomon was returning again to Jerusalem, he heard such a noise, proceeding from the constant hammering of the genii who were occupied with the building of the temple, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were no longer able to converse with one another. He therefore commanded the spirits to suspend their labors, and inquired whether none of them was acquainted with a means by which the various metals

might be wrought without producing such a clamor. Then there stepped out one from among them, and said, "This is known only to the mighty Sachr; but he has hitherto succeeded in escaping from thy dominion."

"Is, then, this Sachr utterly inaccessible?" inquired Solomon.

"Sachr," replied the genius, "is stronger than all of us put together, and is as much our superior in swiftness as in power. Still, I know that he drinks from a fountain in the province of Hidjr once in every month. Perhaps thou mayest succeed, O wise king! to subdue him there to thy scepter."

Solomon commanded forthwith a division of his swift-flying genii to empty the fountain, and to fill it with intoxicating liquor. Some of them he then ordered to linger in its vicinity until they should see Sachr approaching, and then instantly to return and bring him word. A few weeks afterward, when Solomon was standing on the terrace of his palace, he beheld a genius flying from the direction of Hidjr, swifter than the wind. The king inquired of him if he brought news respecting Sachr.

"Sachr is lying overcome with wine at the brink of the fountain," replied the genius, "and we have bound him with chains as massive as the pillars of thy temple; but he will burst them asunder as the hair of a virgin when he has slept off his wine."

Solomon then mounted hastily the winged genius, and in less than an hour was borne to the fountain. It was high time, for Sachr had already opened his eyes again; but his hands and feet were still chained, so that Solomon set the signet on his neck without any hindrance. Sachr uttered such a cry of woe that the whole earth quaked; but Solomon said to him: "Fear not, mighty genius! I will restore thee to liberty as soon as thou shalt indicate the means whereby I may work the hardest metals without noise."

"I, myself, know of no such," replied Sachr; "but the raven will best be able to advise thee. Take only the eggs from a raven's nest, and cover them with a crystal bowl, and thou shalt see how the mother-bird shall cut it through."

Solomon followed Sachr's advice. A raven came and flew about the bowl; but finding that she could not get access to the eggs, she flew away, and a few hours afterward reappeared with a stone in her beak, called Samur, which had no sooner touched the bowl than it fell in two halves.

"Whence hast thou this stone?" inquired Solomon of the raven.

"From a mountain in the distant west," replied the raven.

Solomon then commanded some of the genii to follow the raven to the mountain, and to procure more of these stones; but Sachr he set free again according to his promise. When the chains were taken from him,

he shouted with exultation; but his joy sounded in Solomon's ear like the laughter of scorn. As soon as the spirits returned with the Samur stones, he caused himself to be carried back to Jerusalem by one of them, and divided the stones among the genii, who could now continue their labors without making the slightest noise.

Solomon then constructed a palae for himself, with a profusion of gold, silver, and preeious stones, the like of which no king had ever possessed before him. Many of its halls had erystal floors and ceilings, and he erected a throne of sandal-wood, eovered with gold, and embossed with the most costly jewels. While the building of his palae was in progress, he made a journey to the ancient eity of Damaseus, whose environs are reckoned among the four earthly paradises.

The genius on whom he rode pursued the straightest course, and flew over the valley of ants, which is surrounded by such lofty eliffs, and deep, impassable ravines, that no man had been able to enter it before.

Solomon was much astonished to see beneath him a host of ants, which were as large as wolves, and which, owing to their gray eyes and feet, appeared at a distanee like a cloud.

But, on the other hand, the queen of the ants, which had never seen a human being, was in no small trouble on pereceiving the king, and cried to her subjects, "Retire quickly to your caverns!"

But Allah said to her, "Assemble all thy vassals, and do homage to Solomon, who is king of the whole creation."

Solomon, to whom the winds had wafted these words, then at a distanee of six leagues, descended to the queen, and in a short time the whole valley was covered with ants as far as his eye could reach. Solomon then asked the queen who was standing at their head, "Why fearest thou me, sinee thy hosts are so numerous that they could lay waste the whole earth?"

"I fear none but Allah," replied the queen; "for if my subjects which thou now beholdest were threatened with danger, seventy times their number would appear at a single nod from me."

"Why, then, didst thou eommand thy ants to retire while I was passing above thee?"

"Beeause I feared lest they might look after thee, and thus forget their Creator for a moment."

"Is there any favor that I may show thee ere I depart?" inquired Solomon.

"I know of none: but rather let me advise thee so to live that thou mayest not be ashamed of thy name, which signifies 'The Immaculate'; beware also of ever giving away thy ring without first saying, 'In the name of Allah, the All-merciful.'"

Solomon once more exclaimed, "Lord, thy kingdom is greater than mine!" and took leave of the queen of ants.

On his return he commanded the genius to fly in another direction, so as not to disturb the devotions of the queen and her subjects.

On arriving at the frontiers of Palestine, he heard how some one prayed:—

"My God, who hast chosen Abraham to be thy friend, redeem me soon from this woeful existence!"

Solomon descended to him, and beheld an aged man bowed down with years, and trembling in all his limbs.

"Who art thou?"

"I am an Israelite of the tribe of Judah."

"How old art thou?"

"Allah alone knows. I counted up to my three hundredth year, and since that time full fifty or sixty more must have passed away."

"How camest thou to so great an age, which, since Abraham's time, no human being has attained?"

"I once saw a shooting star in the night of Al-Kadr, and expressed the senseless wish that I might meet with the mightiest prophet before I died."

"Thou hast now reached the goal of thy expectations; prepare thyself to die, for I am the king and prophet Solomon, to whom Allah has granted a power such as no mortal before me ever possessed." Scarcely had he finished these words, when the Angel of Death descended in human form; and took the soul of the aged man.

"Thou must have been quite close to me, since thou camest so promptly," said Solomon to the angel.

"How great is thy mistake! Be it known to thee, O king! that I stand on the shoulders of an angel whose head reaches ten thousand years beyond the seventh heaven, whose feet are five hundred years below the earth, and who, withal, is so powerful, that if Allah permitted it, he could swallow the earth, and all that it contains, without the slightest effort.

"He it is who points out to me when, where, and how I must take a soul. His gaze is fixed on the tree Sidrat Al-muntaha, which bears as many leaves inscribed with names as there are men living on the earth.

"At each birth a new leaf, bearing the name of the newly born, bursts forth; and when any one has reached the end of his life, his leaf withers and falls off, and at the same instant I am with him to receive his soul."

"How dost thou proceed in this matter, and whither takest thou the souls at death?"

"As often as a believer dies, Gabriel attends me, and wraps his soul in a green silken sheet, and then breathes it into a green bird, which

feeds in paradise until the day of the resurrection. But the soul of the sinner I take alone, and, having wrapped it in a coarse, pitch-covered woolen cloth, carry it to the gates of hell, where it wanders among abominable vapors until the last day."

Solomon thanked the angel for his information, and besought him, when he should one day come to take his soul, to conceal his death from all men and spirits.

He then washed the body of the deceased, buried him, and having prayed for his soul, begged for a mitigation of his bodily pains at the trial he was to undergo before the angels Ankir and Munkir. *

This journey had fatigued Solomon so much that he ordered the genii, on his return to Jerusalem, to weave strong silken carpets, which might contain him and his followers, together with all the requisite utensils and equipages for traveling. Whenever he desired thereafter to make a journey, he caused one of these carpets, of a larger or smaller size, according to the number of his attendants, to be spread out before the city, and as soon as all that he required was placed upon it, he gave a signal to the eight winds to raise it up. He then seated himself on his throne, and guided them into whatever direction he pleased, even as a man guides his horses with bit and reins.

One night Abraham appeared to him in a dream, and said: "Allah has distinguished thee above all other men by thy wisdom and power. He has subjected to thy rule the genii, who are erecting a temple at thy command, the like of which the earth has never borne before; and thou ridest on the winds as I once rode on Borak, who shall dwell in paradise until the birth of Mohammed. Show thyself grateful, therefore, unto the only God, and, taking advantage of the ease with which thou canst travel from place to place, visit the cities of Jathrib, † where the greatest of prophets shall one day find shelter and protection, and of Mecca, the place of his birth, where now the holy temple stands which I and my son Ismael (peace be on him!) rebuilt after the flood."

The next morning, Solomon proclaimed that he would undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca, and that each and every Israelite would be permitted to accompany him. There immediately applied so many pilgrims, that Solomon was obliged to have a new carpet woven by the spirits, two leagues in length and two in breadth.

The empty space which remained he filled with camels, oxen, and smaller cattle, which he designed to sacrifice at Mecca, and to divide among the poor.

* These two angels make inquiry of the dead concerning his God and his faith, and torment him if he be not able to answer properly.

† The ancient name of Medina, where Mohammed died.

For himself he had a throne erected, which was so studded with brilliant jewels that no one could raise his eyes to him. The men of distinguished piety occupied golden seats near the throne; the learned were seated on silver, and part of the common people on wood. The genii and demons were commanded to fly before him, for he trusted them so little that he desired to have them constantly in his presence, and therefore always drank out of crystal cups so as never to lose sight of them, even when he was compelled to satisfy his thirst. But the birds he directed to fly above the carpet in close array, to protect the travelers from the sun.

When the arrangements were complete, and men, spirits, birds, and beasts were assembled, he commanded the eight winds to raise up the carpet, with all that it contained, and to carry it to Medina. In the vicinity of that city, he made a signal to the birds to lower their wings, whereupon the winds gradually abated until the carpet rested on the earth.

But no one was permitted to leave the carpet, for Medina was then inhabited by worshipers of idols, with whom the king would not suffer his subjects to come in contact.

Solomon went unattended to the spot where, in later times, Mohammed erected his first mosque,—it was then a burial-ground,—performed his midday devotions, and then returned to the carpet. The birds, at his nod, spread their wings, the winds bore up the carpet, and swept on with it to Mecca. This city was then governed by the Djorhamides, who had migrated there from the southern Arabia, and were at that time worshipers of the only God, keeping the Kaaba as pure from idolatry as it was in the days of Abraham and of Ismael. Solomon therefore entered it, with all his attendants, performed the ceremonies obligatory on pilgrims, and when he had slain the victims which he brought with him from Jerusalem, he pronounced in the Kaaba a long discourse, in which he predicted the future birth of Mohammed, and exhorted all his hearers to enforce faith in him upon their children and descendants.

After a stay of three days, King Solomon resolved to return again to Jerusalem. But when the birds had unfolded their wings, and the carpet was already in motion, he suddenly discovered a ray of light striking upon it, whence he concluded that one of his birds had left its post.

He therefore summoned the eagle, and directed him to call over the names of all the birds, and to report which was absent. The eagle obeyed, and soon came back with the answer that the hoopoo was wanting.

The king grew enraged; the more so, because he needed the hoopoo during the journey, since no other bird possessed its powers to descry the hidden fountains of the desert.

“Soar aloft,” he cried harshly to the eagle; “search for the hoopoo, and bring it hither, that I may pluck off its feathers, and expose it naked to the scorching sun, until the worms shall have consumed it.”

The eagle soared heavenward until the earth beneath him appeared like an inverted bowl. He then halted, and looked in every direction to discover the truant subject. As soon as he spied it coming from the south, he plunged down, and would have seized it in his talons, but the hoopoo adjured him by Solomon to forbear.

“Darest thou to invoke the king’s protection?” replied the eagle. “Well may thy mother weep for thee. The king is enraged, for he has discovered thy absence, and sworn to punish it terribly.”

“Lead me to him,” rejoined the other. “I know that he will excuse my absence when he hears where I have been, and what I have to report of my excursion.”

The eagle led him to the king, who was sitting on his judgment throne with wrathful countenance, and instantly drew the delinquent violently toward him. The hoopoo trembled in every limb, and hung down his plumage in token of submission. But when Solomon would have grasped him still more tightly, he cried: “Remember, O prophet of Allah! that thou, too, shalt one day give an account unto the Lord; let me, therefore, not be condemned unheard.”

“How canst thou excuse thy absentsing thyself without my permission?”

“I bring information respecting a country and a queen whose names thou hast not even heard of—the country of Saba, and Queen Balkis.”

“These names are indeed quite strange to me. Who has informed thee of them?”

“A hoopoo from those regions, whom I met during one of my short excursions. In the course of our conversation I spoke to him of thee, and thy extensive dominions, and he was astonished that thy fame should not yet have reached his home. He entreated me, therefore, to accompany him there, and convince myself that it would be worth thy while to subject the land of Saba unto thy scepter.

“On our way he related to me the whole history of that country down to its present queen, who rules over so large an army that she requires twelve thousand captains to command it.”

Solomon relinquished his hold of the hoopoo, and commanded him to recount all that he had heard of that country and its history, whereupon the bird began as follows: “Most mighty king and prophet! be it known to thee that Saba is the capital of an extensive country in the south of Arabia, and was founded by King Saba, Ibn Jashab, Ibn Sarab, Ibn Kachtan. His name was properly Abd Shems (the servant of the Sun); but he had received the surname of Saba (one who takes captive) by reason of his numerous conquests.

“Saba was the largest and most superb city ever constructed by the hand of man, and, at the same time, was so strongly fortified that it might have defied the united armies of the world. But that which especially distinguished this city of marble palaces was the magnificent gardens in the center of which it stood. For King Saba had, in compliance with the counsels of the wise Lockman, constructed vast dikes and numerous canals, both to guard the people from inundation during the rainy season, and also against want of water in time of drought.

“Thus it came to pass that this country, which is so vast that a good horseman would require a month to traverse it, became rapidly the richest and most fertile of the whole earth. It was covered in every direction with the finest trees, so that its travelers knew nothing of the scorching sun. Its air, too, was so pure and refreshing, and its sky so transparent, that the inhabitants lived to a very great age, in the enjoyment of perfect health. The land of Saba was, as it were, a diadem on the brow of the universe.

“This state of felicity endured as long as it pleased Allah. King Saba, its founder, died, and was succeeded by other kings, who enjoyed the fruits of Lockman's labors without thinking of preserving them; but time was busy with their destruction. The torrents, plunging from the adjacent mountains, gradually undermined the dike which had been constructed to restrain and to distribute them into the various canals, so that it fell in at last, and the whole country was, in consequence, laid waste by a fearful flood. The first precursors of an approaching disaster showed themselves in the reign of King Amru. In his time it was that the priestess Dharifa beheld in a dream a vast dark cloud, which, bursting amid terrific thunderings, poured destruction upon the land. She told her dream to the king, and made no secret of her fears respecting the welfare of his empire; but the king and his courtiers endeavored to silence her, and continued, as before, their heedless, careless courses.

“One day, however, while Amru was in a grove, in dalliance with two maidens, the priestess stepped before him with disheveled hair and ruffled countenance, and predicted anew the speedy desolation of the country. The king dismissed his companions; and having seated the priestess beside him, inquired of her what new omen foreboded this evil. ‘On my way hither,’ replied Dharifa, ‘I met crimson rats standing erect, and wiping their eyes with their feet, and a turtle, which lay on its back, struggling in vain to rise; these are certain signs of a flood, which shall reduce this country to the sad condition in which it was in ancient times.’

“‘What proof givest thou me of the truth of thy statement?’ inquired Amru.

“‘Go to the dike, and thine own eyes shall convince thee.’

“The king went, but speedily came back to the grove with distracted countenance. ‘I have seen a dreadful sight,’ he cried. ‘Three rats as large as porcupines were gnawing the dikes with their teeth, and tearing off pieces of rock which fifty men would not have been able to move.’

“Dharifa then gave him still other signs; and he himself had a dream, in which he saw the tops of the loftiest trees covered with sand—an evident presage of the approaching flood—so that he resolved to fly from his country. Yet, in order to dispose of his castles and possessions to advantage, he concealed what he had seen and heard, and invented the following pretext for his emigration.

“One day he gave a grand banquet to his highest officers of state and the chiefs of his army, but arranged with his son beforehand that he should strike him in the face during a discussion. When this accordingly took place at the public table, the king sprang up, drew his sword, and feigned to slay his son; but, as he had foreseen, his guests rushed in between them, and hurried away the prince. Amru then swore that he would no longer remain in a country where he had suffered such a disgrace. But, when all his estates were sold, he avowed the true motive of his emigration, and many tribes joined themselves to him.



“Soon after his departure the predicted calamities took place, for the inhabitants of Saba, or Mareb, as this city is sometimes called, listened neither to the warnings of Dharifa nor to the admonition of a prophet whom Allah had sent to them. The strong dike fell in, and the waters, pouring from the mountain, devastated the city and the entire vicinity. As, however, the men of Saba,” continued the hoopoo, in his narrative before King Solomon, “who had fled into the mountain, were improved by

their misfortune, and repented, they soon succeeded, with the help of Allah, in constructing new dams, and in restoring their country to a high degree of power and prosperity, which went on increasing under the succeeding kings, though the old vices, too, reappeared, and, instead of the Creator of heaven and earth, they worshiped the sun.

“The last king of Saba, named Sharahbil, was a monster of tyranny. He had a vizier descended from the ancient royal house of the Himiarites, who was so handsome that he found favor in the eyes of the daughters of the genii, and they often placed themselves in his way in the shape of gazelles, merely to gaze upon him. One of them, whose name was Umeira, felt so ardent an attachment for the vizier, that she completely forgot the distinction between men and genii, and one day, while he was following the chase, appeared in the form of a beautiful virgin, and offered him her hand, on condition that he would follow her, and never demand an account of any of her actions. The vizier thought the daughter of the genii so far exalted above all human beauty, that he lost his self-command, and consented, without reflection, to all that she proposed. Umeira then journeyed with him to the island where she lived, and married him. Within a year's time she bore a daughter, whom she called Balkis; but soon after that she left her husband, because he (as Moses had done with Alkidhr) had repeatedly inquired into her motives when unable to comprehend her actions. The vizier then returned with Balkis to his native country, and concealed himself in one of its valleys at a distance from the capital: there Balkis grew up like the fairest flower of Yemen; but she was obliged to live in greater retirement the older she became, for her father feared lest Sharahbil might hear of her, and treat her as remorselessly as he did the other maidens of Saba.

“Nevertheless, Heaven had decreed that all of his precautions should be abortive; for the king, in order to learn the condition of his empire, and the secret sentiments of his subjects, once made a journey on foot, disguised as a beggar, throughout the land. When he came to the region where the vizier lived, he heard both him and his daughter much spoken of, because no one knew who he was, nor whence he had come, nor why he lived in such obscurity. The king therefore caused his residence to be pointed out, and he reached it at the moment when the vizier and his daughter were seated at table. His first glance fell on Balkis, who was then in her fourteenth year, and beautiful like an houri of paradise, for, with the grace and loveliness of woman, she combined the transparent complexion and the majesty of the genii. But how great was his astonishment, when, fixing his eye on her father, he recognized his former vizier, who had so suddenly disappeared, and whose fate had remained unknown!

“As soon as the vizier observed that the king had recognized him, he fell down at his feet, imploring his favor, and relating all that had befallen him during his absence. Sharahbil, from love to Balkis, pardoned him, but demanded that he should resume his former functions, and at the same time presented him with a palace in the finest situation near his capital. But a few weeks had scarcely elapsed, when the vizier one morning returned with a heavily clouded brow, from the city, and said to Balkis, ‘My fears are now realized! The king has asked thy hand, and I could not refuse without endangering my life, although I would rather see thee laid in thy grave than in the arms of this tyrant.’

“‘Dismiss your fears, my father,’ replied Balkis, ‘I shall free me and my whole sex from this abandoned man. Only put on a cheerful brow, that he may not conceive any suspicion, and request of him as the only favor I demand, that our nuptials be solemnized here in privacy.’

“The king cheerfully agreed to the wish of his bride, and repaired on the following morning, accompanied by a few servants, to the vizier’s palace, where he was entertained with royal magnificence. After the repast, the vizier retired with his guests, and Balkis remained alone with the king; but on a given signal, her female slaves appeared; one of them sang, another played on the harp, a third danced before them, and a fourth presented wine in golden cups. The last was, by Balkis’s directions, especially active, so that the king, whom she urged by every art to partake of the strongest wines, soon fell back lifeless on his divan. Balkis now drew forth a dagger from beneath her robe, and plunged it so deeply into the heart of Sharahbil, that his soul rushed instantly to hell. She then called her father, and pointing to the corpse before her, said: ‘To-morrow morning, let the most influential men of the city, and also some chiefs of the army, be commanded, in the king’s name, to send him their daughters. This will produce a revolt which we shall improve to our advantage.’

“Balkis was not mistaken in her conjecture, for the men whose daughters were demanded, called their kinsmen together, and marched in the evening to the palace of the vizier, threatening to set it on fire unless the king should be delivered up to them.

“Balkis then cut off the king’s head, and flung it through the window to the assembled insurgents. Instantly there arose the loud exultations of the multitude; the city was festively illuminated, and Balkis, as protectress of her sex, was proclaimed Queen of Saba. This queen,” concluded the hoopoo, “has been reigning there since many years, in great wisdom and prudence, and justice prevails throughout her now flourishing empire. She assists at all the councils of her viziers, concealed from the gaze of men by a fine curtain, seated on a lofty throne of most

skilful workmanship, and adorned with jewels; but, like many of the rulers of that country before her, she is a worshiper of the sun."

"We shall see," said Solomon, when the hoopoo had concluded the account of his journey, "whether thou hast spoken the truth, or art to be numbered among deceivers."

He then caused a fountain to be pointed out by the hoopoo, performed his ablutions, and, when he had prayed, wrote the following lines: "From Solomon, the son of David and servant of Allah, to Balkis, queen of Saba. In the name of Allah the All-merciful and Gracious, blessed are they who follow the guidance of Fate! follow my invitation, and present thyself before me as a believer." This note he sealed with musk, stamped with his signet, and gave to the hoopoo, with the words: "Take this letter to Queen Balkis; then retire, but not so far as to preclude thee from hearing what she shall advise with her viziers respecting it."

The hoopoo, with the letter in his bill, darted away like an arrow, and arrived next day at Mareb. The queen was surrounded by all of her counselors, when he stepped into her hall of state, and dropped the letter into her lap. She started as soon as she beheld Solomon's mighty signet, opened the letter hurriedly, and, having first read it to herself, communicated its contents to her counselors, among whom were also her highest chieftains, and entreated their counsel on this important matter.

But they replied with one voice, "You may rely on our power and courage, and act according to your good pleasure and wisdom."

"Before, then, I engage in war," said Balkis, "which always entails much suffering and misfortune upon a country, I will send some presents to King Solomon, and see how he will receive my ambassadors. If he suffers himself to be bribed, he is no more than other kings who have fallen before our power; but if he reject my presents, then is he a true prophet, whose faith we must embrace."

She then dressed five hundred youths like maidens, and as many maidens like young men, and commanded the former to behave in the presence of Solomon like girls, and the latter like boys. She then had a thousand carpets prepared, wrought with gold and silver; a crown, composed of the finest pearls and hyacinths; and many loads of musk, amber, aloes, and other precious products of South Arabia. To these she added a closed casket containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced, and a goblet of crystal.

"As a true prophet," she wrote to him, "thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens, to divine the contents of the closed casket, to perforate the pearl, to thread the diamond, and to fill the goblet with water that has neither dropped from the clouds nor gushed forth from the earth."

All of these presents and her letter she sent by experienced and intelligent men, to whom she said at their departure: "If Solomon meet you with pride and harshness, be not cast down, for these are indications of human weakness; but if he receive you with kindness and condescension, be on your guard, for you then have to do with a prophet."

The hoopoo heard all this, for he had kept close to the queen until the ambassadors had departed. He then flew in a direct line, without resting, to the tent of Solomon, to whom he reported what he had heard. The king then commanded the genii to produce a carpet which should cover the space of nine parasangs, and to spread it out at the steps of his throne toward the south. To the eastward, where the carpet ceased, he caused a lofty golden wall to be erected, and to the westward, one of silver. On both sides of the carpet he ranged the rarest foreign animals, and all kinds of genii and demons.

The ambassadors were greatly confused on arriving in Solomon's encampment, where a splendor and magnificence were displayed such as they had never conceived before. The first thing they did on beholding the immense carpet, which their eyes were unable to survey, was to fling away their thousand carpets which they had brought as a present for the king. The nearer they came the greater waxed their perplexity, on account of the many singular birds, and beasts, and spirits, through whose ranks they had to pass in approaching Solomon; but their hearts were relieved as soon as they stood before him, for he greeted them with kindness, and inquired with smiling lips what had brought them to him.

"We are the bearers of a letter from Queen Balkis," replied the most eloquent of the embassy, while he presented the letter.

"I know its contents," replied Solomon, "without opening it, as well as those of the casket which you have brought with you; and I shall, by the help of Allah, perforate your pearl, and cause your diamond to be threaded. But I will first of all fill your goblet with water which has not fallen from the clouds nor gushed from the earth, and distinguish the beardless youths from the virgins who accompany you." He then caused one thousand silver bowls and basins to be brought, and commanded the male and female slaves to wash themselves. The former immediately put their hands, on which the water was poured, to their faces; but the latter first emptied it into their right hands as it flowed from the bowl into their left, and then washed their faces with both their hands. Hereupon Solomon readily discovered the sexes of the slaves to the great astonishment of the ambassadors. This being done, he commanded a tall and corpulent slave to mount on a young and fiery horse, and to ride through the camp at the top of his speed, and to return instantly to him. When the slave returned with the steed to

Solomon, there poured from him whole torrents of perspiration, so that the crystal goblet was immediately filled.

"Here," said Solomon to the ambassadors, "is water which has neither come out of the earth nor from heaven." The pearl he perforated with the stone, for the knowledge of which he was indebted to Sachr and the raven; but the threading of the diamond, in whose opening there was every possible curve, puzzled him, until a demon brought him a worm, which crept through the jewel, leaving a silken thread behind. Solomon inquired of the worm how he might reward him for this great service, by which he had saved his dignity as a prophet. The worm requested that a fine fruit-tree should be appointed to him as his dwelling. Solomon gave him the mulberry-tree, which from that time affords a shelter and nourishment to the silkworm forever.

"You have seen now," said Solomon to the ambassadors, "that I have successfully passed all the trials which your queen has imposed upon me. Return to her, together with the presents destined for me, of which I do not stand in need, and tell her that if she do not accept my faith and do homage unto me, I shall invade her country with an army which no human power shall be able to resist, and drag her a wretched captive to my capital."

The ambassadors left Solomon under the fullest conviction of his might and mission, a prophet; and their report respecting all that had passed between them and the king made the same impression on Queen Balkis.

"Solomon is a mighty prophet," said she to the viziers who surrounded her, and had listened to the narrative of the ambassadors. "The best plan I can adopt is to journey to him with the leaders of my army, in order to ascertain what he demands of us." She then commanded the necessary preparations for the journey to be made; but, before her departure, she locked up her throne, which she left with the greatest reluctance, in a hall which it was impossible to reach without first stepping through six other closed halls; and all the seven halls were in the innermost of the seven closed apartments, of which the palace, guarded by her most faithful servants, consisted.

When Queen Balkis, attended by her twelve thousand captains, each of whom commanded several thousand men, had come within a parasang of Solomon's encampment, he said to his hosts: "Which of you will bring me the throne of Queen Balkis before she come to me as a believer, that I may rightfully appropriate this curious piece of art while it is yet in the possession of an infidel?"

Hereupon, a misshapen demon (who was as large as a mountain) said: "I will bring it to thee before noon, ere thou dismiss thy council. I am not wanting in power for the achievement, and thou mayest intrust me with the throne without any apprehension."

But Solomon had not so much time left, for he already perceived at a distance the clouds of dust raised by the army of Saba.

“Then,” said his vizier Assaf, the son of Burahja, who, by reason of his acquaintance with the holy names of Allah, found nothing too difficult, “raise thy eyes toward heaven, and before thou shalt be able to cast them down again to the earth, the throne of the Queen of Saba shall stand here before thee.”

Solomon gazed heavenward, and Assaf called Allah by his holiest name, praying that he might send him the throne of Balkis. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, the throne rolled through the bowels of the earth until it came to the throne of Solomon, and rose up through the opening ground, whereupon Solomon exclaimed, “How great is the goodness of Allah! this was assuredly intended as a trial whether I should be grateful to him or not; but whosoever acknowledgeth the goodness of Allah, does it to himself, and whosoever denieth it, does no less so. Allah has no need of human gratitude!”

After having admired the throne, he said to one of his servants: “Make some change on it, and let us see whether Balkis will recognize it again.” The servants took several parts of the throne to pieces, and replaced them differently; but when Balkis was asked whether her throne was like it, she replied: “It seems as if it were the same.”

This and other replies of the queen convinced Solomon of her superior understanding, for she had undoubtedly recognized her throne; but her answer was so equivocal that it did not sound either reproachful or suspicious. But, before he would enter into more intimate relations with her, he desired to clear up a certain point respecting her, and to see whether she actually had cloven feet, as several of his demons would have him to believe, or whether they had invented the defect only from fear lest he might marry her and beget children, who, as descendants of the genii, would be even more mighty than himself. He therefore caused her to be conducted through a hall whose floor was of crystal, and under which water, tenanted by every variety of fish, was flowing. Balkis, who had never seen a crystal floor, supposed that there was water to be passed through, and therefore raised her robe slightly, when the king discovered to his great joy, a beautifully-shaped female foot. When his eye was satisfied, he called to her: “Come hither! there is no water here, but only a crystal floor; and confess thyself to faith in the one only God.” Balkis approached the throne, which stood at the end of the hall, and in Solomon’s presence abjured the worship of the sun.

Solomon then married Balkis, but reinstated her as Queen of Saba, and spent three days in every month with her.

On one of his progresses from Jerusalem to Mareb, he passed through a valley inhabited by apes, which, however, dressed and lived

like men, and had more comfortable dwellings than other apes, and even bore all kinds of weapons. He descended from his flying carpet, and marched into the valley with a few of his troops. The apes hurried together to drive him back, but one of their elders stepped forward and said: "Let us rather seek safety in submission, for our foe is a holy prophet." Three apes were immediately chosen as ambassadors to negotiate with Solomon. He received them kindly, and inquired to which class of apes they belonged, and how it came to pass that they were so skilled in all human arts. The ambassadors replied: "Be not astonished at us, for we are descended from men, and are the remnant of a Jewish community, which, notwithstanding all admonition, continued to desecrate the Sabbath, until Allah cursed them, and turned them into apes." Solomon was moved to compassion; and, to protect them from all further animosity on the part of man, gave to them a parchment, in which he secured to them forever the undisturbed possession of this valley.

[At the time of the Caliph Omar, there came a division of troops into this valley; but when they would have raised their tents to occupy it, there came an aged ape, with a scroll of parchment in his hands, and presented it to the leader of the soldiers. Yet, as no one was able to read it, they sent it to Omar at Medina, to whom it was explained by a Jew, who had been converted to Islam. He sent it back forthwith, and commanded the troops to evacuate the valley.]

Meanwhile, Balkis soon found a dangerous rival in Djarada, the daughter of King Nubara, who governed one of the finest islands in the Indian Ocean. This king was a fearful tyrant, and forced all of his subjects to worship him as a god.

As soon as Solomon heard of it, he marched against him with as many troops as his largest carpet could contain, conquered the island, and slew the king with his own hand. When he was on the point of leaving the palace of Nubara, there stepped before him a virgin who far surpassed in beauty and grace the whole harem of Solomon, not even the Queen of Saba excepted. He commanded her to be led to him, and, threatening her with death, forced her to accept his faith and his hand.

But Djarada saw in Solomon only the murderer of her father, and replied to his caresses with sighs and tears. Solomon hoped that time would heal her wounds, and reconcile her to her fate; but when, at the expiration of a whole year, her heart still remained closed against love and joy, he overwhelmed her with reproaches, and inquired how he might assuage her grief.

"As it is not within thy power," replied Djarada, "to recall my father to life, send a few genii to my home; let them bring his statue, and place it in my chamber; perhaps the very sight of his image will procure me some consolation."

Solomon was weak enough to comply with her request, and to defile his palace with the image of a man who had deified himself, and to whom even Djarada secretly paid divine honors. This idol worship had lasted forty days, when Assaf was informed of it. He therefore mounted the rostrum, and, before the whole assembled people, pronounced a discourse in which he described the pure and God-devoted life of all the prophets, from Adam until David. In passing to Solomon, he praised the wisdom and piety of the first years of his reign, but regretted that his later courses showed less of the true fear of God.

As soon as Solomon had learned the contents of this discourse, he summoned Assaf, and inquired of him whereby he had deserved to be thus censured before the whole people.

Assaf replied, "Thou hast permitted thy passion to blind thee, and suffered idolatry in thy palace."

Solomon hastened to the apartments of Djarada, whom he found prostrate in prayer before the image of her father, and exclaiming: "We belong unto Allah, and shall one day return to Him!" he shivered the idol to pieces, and punished the princess. He then put on new robes, which none but pure virgins had touched, strewed ashes on his head, went into the desert, and implored Allah for forgiveness.

Allah pardoned his sin; but he was to atone for it during forty days. On returning home in the evening, he gave his signet into the keeping of one of his wives. Sachr assumed his form, and obtained from her the ring. Soon after, Solomon himself claimed it; but he was laughed at and derided, for the light of prophecy had departed from him, so that no one recognized him as king, and he was driven from his palace as a deceiver and impostor. He now wandered up and down the country, and wherever he gave his name he was mocked as a madman, and shamefully entreated. In this manner he lived nine-and-thirty days, sometimes begging, sometimes living on herbs. On the fortieth day he entered into the service of a fisherman, who promised him as his daily wages two fishes, one of which he hoped to exchange for bread. But on that day the power of Sachr came to an end; for this wicked spirit had, notwithstanding his external resemblance to Solomon, and his possession of the signet ring, by which he had obtained power over spirits, men, and animals, excited suspicion by his ungodly deportment, and his senseless and unlawful ordinances,

The elders of Israel came daily to Assaf, preferring new charges against the king; but Assaf constantly found the doors of the palace closed against him.

But when, finally, on the fortieth day, even the wives of Solomon came and complained that the king no longer observed any of the prescribed rules of purification, Assaf, accompanied by some doctors of the

law, who were reading aloud in the Thora, forced his way, spite of the gate-keepers and sentinels, who would have hindered him, into the hall of state, where Sachr sojourned. No sooner did he hear the word of God, which had been revealed to Moses,* than he shrunk back into his native form, and flew in haste to the shore of the sea, where the signet ring dropped from him.

By the providence of the Lord of the universe, the ring was caught up and swallowed by a fish, which was soon afterward driven into the net of the fisherman whom Solomon served. Solomon received this fish as the wages of his labor, and when he ate it in the evening he found his ring.

He then commanded the winds to take him back to Jerusalem, where he assembled around him all the chiefs of men, birds, beasts, and spirits, and related to them all that had befallen him during the last forty days, and how Allah had, in a miraculous manner, restored the ring which Sachr had wilily usurped. He then caused Sachr to be pursued, and forced him into a copper flask, which he sealed with his signet, and flung between two rocks into the Sea of Tiberias, where he must remain until the day of the resurrection.

The government of Solomon, which after this occurrence lasted ten years, was not eluded again by misfortune. Djarada, the cause of his calamity, he never desired to see again, although she was now truly converted. But Queen Balkis he visited regularly every month until the day of her death. When she died, he caused her remains to be taken to the city of Tadmor, which she had founded, and buried her there. But her grave remained unknown until the reign of Caliph Walid, when, in consequence of long-continued rains, the walls of Tadmor fell in, and a stone coffin was discovered sixty cubits long and forty wide, bearing this inscription:—

“Here is the grave of the pious Balkis, the Queen of Saba and consort of the Prophet Solomon, the son of David. She was converted to the true faith in the thirteenth year of Solomon’s accession to the throne, married him in the fourteenth, and died on Monday, the second day of Rabi-Awwal, in the three-and-twentieth year of his reign.”

The son of the caliph caused the lid of the coffin to be raised, and discovered a female form, which was as fresh and well preserved as if it had but just been buried. He immediately made a report of it to his

* There is an allusion here to the peculiar ideas which both Mohammedans and Jews attach to the recitation of scriptural or imagined sacred words and sentences. They believe their simple reading or repetition valuable; as being meritorious before God, independent of any reaction which it may produce on their heart and understanding; and because every letter is supposed to possess a (cabalistic) charm acting with resistless power upon spirits, and even upon the Lord himself.

father, inquiring what should be done with the coffin. Walid commanded that it should be left in the place where it was found, and be so built up with marble stones that it should never be desecrated again by human hands. This command was obeyed; and, notwithstanding the many devastations and changes which the city of Tadmor and her walls have suffered, no traces have been found of the tomb of Queen Balkis.

A few months after the death of the Queen of Saba, the Angel of Death appeared unto Solomon with six faces: one to the right, and one to the left; one in front, and one behind; one above his head, and one below it. The king, who had never seen him in this form, was startled, and inquired what this sixfold visage signified.

“With the face to the right,” replied the Angel of Death, “I fetch the souls from the east; with that to the left, the souls from the west; with that above, the souls of the inhabitants of heaven; with that below, the demons from the depths of the earth; with that behind, the souls of the people of Jadjudj and Madjudj (Gog and Magog); but with that in front, those of the Faithful, to whom also thy soul belongs.”

“Must, then, even the angels die?”

“All that lives becomes the prey of death as soon as Israfil shall have blown the trumpet the second time. Then I shall put to death even Gabriel and Michael, and immediately after that must myself die, at the command of Allah. Then God alone remains, and exclaims, ‘Whose is the world?’ but there shall not a living creature be left to answer him! And forty years must elapse, when Israfil shall be recalled to life, that he may blow his trumpet a third time, to wake all the dead.”

“And who among men shall first rise from the grave?”

“Mohammed, the prophet, who shall in later times spring from the descendants of Ismael.

“Israfil himself and Gabriel, together with other angels, shall come to his grave at Medina, and cry: ‘Thou purest and noblest of souls! return again to thy immaculate body, and revive it again.’ Then shall he rise from his grave, and shake the dust from his head. Gabriel greets him, and points to the winged Borak, who stands prepared for him, and to a standard and a crown which Allah sends him from paradise. The angel then says to him: ‘Come to thy Lord, and mine, thou elect among all creatures! The gardens of Eden are festively adorned for thee; the houris await thee with impatience.’ He then lifts him upon Borak, places the heavenly standard in his hand, and the crown upon his head, and leads him into paradise. Thereupon the rest of mankind shall be called to life. They shall all be brought to Palestine, where the great tribunal shall be held, and where no other intercession than that of Mohammed is accepted. That will be a fearful day, when every one shall

think only of himself. Adam will cry: 'O Lord, save my soul only! I care not for Eve, nor for Abel.' Noah will exclaim: 'O Lord, preserve me from hell, and do with Ham and Shem as thou pleasest!' Abraham shall say: 'I pray neither for Ismael nor Isaac, but for my own safety only.' Even Moses shall forget his brother Aaron. None but Mohammed shall implore the mercy of God for all the faithful of his people. They that are risen will then be conducted over the bridge Sirat, which is composed of seven bridges, each of which is three thousand years long. This bridge is as sharp as a sword and as fine as a hair. One-third of it is an ascent, one-third is even, and one-third is a descent. He alone who passes all these bridges with success can be admitted into paradise. The unbelievers fall into hell from the first bridge; the prayerless, from the second; the uncharitable, from the third; whoever has eaten in Ramadhan, from the fourth; whoever has neglected the pilgrimage, from the fifth; whoever hath not commended the good, from the sixth; and whoso hath not prevented evil, from the seventh."

"When shall the resurrection be?"

"That is known only to Allah; but assuredly not before the advent of Mohammed, the last of all prophets. The sun shall rise in the west, and many other signs and wonders shall precede."

"Suffer me to live until the completion of my temple, for at my death the genii and demons will cease their labor."

"Thy hourglass has run out, and it is not in my power to prolong thy life another second."

"Then follow me to my crystal hall!"

The Angel of Death accompanied Solomon unto the hall, whose walls were entirely of crystal. There Solomon prayed; and, leaning upon his staff, requested the angel to take his soul in that position. The angel consented; and his death was thus concealed from the demons a whole year, till the temple was finished. It was not until the staff, when destroyed by worms, broke down with him, that his death was observed by the spirits, who, in order to revenge themselves, concealed all kinds of magical books under his throne, so that many believers thought Solomon had been a sorcerer. But he was a pure and divine prophet, as it is written in the Koran: "Solomon was no infidel, but the demons were unbelievers, and taught all manner of sorceries." When the king was lying on the ground, the angels carried him, together with his signet ring, to a cave, where they shall guard him until the day of resurrection.

PART IV
—
MYTHOLOGY

HINDOO MYTHOLOGY

By ELSA BARKER

OF ALL the mythologies of the ancient world, there is none richer in character and suggestion than the one that has grown up around the original Hindoo conception of Brahm. The first impression made upon the mind by a contemplation of the Indian Pantheon is the incalculable number of divinities. But of the estimated three hundred and thirty million Hindoo gods, there are perhaps a score that are of great and individual importance. These primary gods, however, are worshiped under many names, according to their attributes and the metaphysical distinctions conceived by the subtle Indian mind; they are given many avatars or incarnations, each distinguished by a separate name, and each having a train of offspring and other attendants, who in turn have their own dependents and corollaries.

It is impossible in a brief chapter to give a detailed account of more than a small fraction of the Hindoo Pantheon; but among this myriad of devas, or "bright oncs," there are a few especially significant representatives whose names are so often met with in literature and cultured conversation that some understanding of them is necessary, in this age of diffused knowledge, to one who has any ambition to be considered well informed.

The names of the Hindoo trinity, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, are daily becoming better known in Europe and America; while the Indian idea of reincarnation, or the transmigration of souls, has stimulated the imagination of many modern poets. Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva—the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer—are the principal Hindoo gods; for Brahm himself, of whom the aforesaid trinity are aspects, is in his lonely grandeur too awful to be contemplated.

Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva are variously symbolized as Spirit, Matter, and Time; as Earth, Water, and Fire, etc.; but as Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer or Regenerator, they are most easily understood. Each of these three great gods has his special devotees, though the cult of Brahma has almost disappeared. Vishnu and Siva, however, has each millions of worshipers; and while there is said to be but one temple in India consecrated to Brahma alone, there are thousands erected to Vishnu and Siva. There is another sect of less importance, called the Sacta, who worship the Sacti, or female principle of the gods. These Sacti will be taken up and explained in the body of this chapter, for each

of the three great gods — and many a lesser one — has his spouse, called also his “pervading energy”; and around these goddesses has grown up a marvelous system of legends. These Hindoo legends are full of contradictions, and the obvious reason for this is that each sect has modified the stories so as to exalt its own particular god at the expense of the others. Thus, for instance, the word Iswara — Lord — is claimed by each sect for its special deity; and the word may mean Brahma, Vishnu, or Siva, according as it is used by an adherent of one or another of those systems. So with Narayana, the spirit of Brahma “moving on the waters.” The sun, too, is used as a symbol of each of these three gods, besides having his own especial deity, Surya, or Mitra, under which name he is sometimes addressed in the Vedic hymns.

Like every other scheme of mythology, the Hindoo has personified the elements, the dawn, the spirits of the principal planets, the vault of heaven, the idea of death, of love, etc.; but unlike the beauty-loving Greeks, the Hindoos have made most of their gods unpleasant to look upon. There is no part of Indian mythology, however, that has not some hidden meaning, either philosophical, astronomical, or historical; and even the frightful Kali — consort of Siva the Destroyer, in his aspect of Time — becomes beautiful when viewed in her symbolic aspect, girdled by the serpents of eternity, necklaced by the string of human heads, one hand holding the exterminating sword of Time, and another pointing upward in allusion to the regeneration of nature by a new creation. Even a brief study of the wonderful mythology of the Hindoos gives one a clearer insight into the subtleties of the human imagination in its gropings after tangible symbols of its metaphysical conceptions.

BRAHM

THE “Unknown God” of the Hindoos is Brahm. This being — if what is impersonal and sexless may be called a being — is never addressed in prayer or praise; no temples or altars are erected to him; and his very name is almost too sacred to be spoken. He is the unknowable, the all, the universal source and end of existence.

So vast is the Hindoo conception of this highest god that it is only in his true aspects of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva — or Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer — that he is regarded as approachable by human understanding. But these three aspects or persons are constantly coinciding. Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer or Regenerator, often become one; and it seems to have been this trinity, and not the first person of it alone, that Emerson had in mind when he wrote his famous poem “Brahma,” which aroused so much discussion at the time of its appearance in the “Atlantic Monthly,” in 1857. This poem

is quoted because it conveys a clearer impression of the Hindoo conception of the supreme than any other English composition of equal length.

“If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

“Far or forget to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
And one to me are shame and fame.

“They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahman sings.

“The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.”

While the learned Brahmans thus acknowledge and adore one God, without form or quality, eternal, unchangeable, and occupying all space, they have carefully confined their doctrines to their own schools, and have tacitly assented to, or even taught in public, a religion in which, in supposed compliance with the infirmities and passions of human nature, the Deity has been brought more to a level with our own prejudices and wants, and the incomprehensible attributes assigned to him invested with sensible and even human forms. Upon this foundation the most discordant fictions have been erected, from which priestcraft and superstition have woven a mythology of the most extensive character. The Brahmans allege that it is easier to impress the minds of the rude and ignorant by intelligible symbols than by means which are incomprehensible. Acting upon this principle, the supreme and omnipotent God, whom the Hindoo has been taught to consider too mighty for him to attempt to approach, or even to name, has been lost sight of in the multiplicity of deities whose graven images have been worshiped in his place.

— Balfour's "Encyclopedia of India."

BRAHMA AND SARASWATI

IN WRITING of the three chief gods of the Hindoos, the most interesting and suggestive method of treatment is that which assigns to each god the qualities attributed to him by the more rational among his own

especial worshipers; but which avoids, at the same time, all extravagancies that would cloud the understanding or conflict with a clear and impartial view of the trinity as a whole.

Brahma, the creator, is said to have been originated but not begotten, and born from "a golden egg resplendent as the Sun."* He is the lord of all creatures, the father of all the universes, and is regarded as the Divine Mind from which came all created things. From his heart sprang Kama or Desire, the strongest of the gods, outside the triad; from his head, Cosmic Electricity; from his eye, the Sun; from his mind, the Moon, etc. After creating the world he peopled it with the four castes that form the Hindoo social order. From Brahma's mouth sprang the Brahmans or highest caste; from his arm the soldier caste; from his thigh the merchant caste, and from his feet the servile caste.



Brahma is variously pictured, but generally with four heads and four arms. In one hand he holds a book, probably the Vedas, in another a rosary, in the third a sacrificial spoon, and in the fourth a vase. There is a legend to the effect that Brahma originally had five heads; but that after a dispute with Vishnu and Siva as to the supremacy of the respective gods, his fifth head was cut off by Siva.

As the two principles, masculine and feminine, active and passive, permeate all things, Brahma, the androgynous god, is said to have divided himself into two—Brahma and Saraswati, himself and his sacti, or spouse. Saraswati, as "bride of the Divine Mind," is appropriately regarded as the goddess of poetry, painting, sculpture, eloquence, learning, and music, by reason of the creative genius required for these arts. Saraswati is also said to have been the inventor of the Sanskrit language, and of all the sciences that are perpetuated by writing. She is therefore analogous to the Minerva of western mythology; and though the worship of Brahma has fallen into disuse, the annual festival of Saraswati is highly honored. There are few images of Saraswati, but in painting she is often represented dressed in red, the color of Brahma, and holding in her hand a lyre—appropriate symbol of the goddess of music and poetry. In some pictures Saraswati is shown four-handed, like Brahma, and riding on a peacock.

But the most interesting pictures of Brahma and Saraswati represent them as one human figure, the right side of which is man and the left side woman. These are the more mystic representations, and some of them are marvels of pictorial symbolism.† The wonderful imagination

*"The Secret Doctrine" of Blavatsky.

†See "Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism," by Thomas Inma and Moor's "Hindu Pantheon."

of the Hindoo is nowhere better illustrated than in these pictures of the gods and goddesses under their varied and—to the mind untrained in metaphysical subtleties—confusing aspects. But there is no confusion in the minds of the cultured Hindoos with regard to the attributes of their gods. So perfect is the symbolism expressed in some of their religious pictures that a thorough explanation of one of them would fill a volume. The puzzling statement so often made by Hindoos that Saraswati, Lakshmi, the Hindoo Venus and spouse of Vishnu the Preserver, and Kali—Parvati, spouse of Siva the Destroyer, are one and the same goddess, is but another way of saying that the universal feminine principle in nature is one, and that in it rest the threefold activities of creation, preservation, and destruction, or regeneration.

Reference is often made in Eastern books to the "breath of Brahma," a "day of Brahma," an "age of Brahma," etc. The Hindoo idea of eternity embraces periods of time which stagger the matter-of-fact Western mind. By the Hindoo an eternity is variously interpreted; it may mean a so-called day, a year, or age of Brahma. In order to make clear the meaning of these terms, it is first necessary to explain the Hindoo idea of cosmic periodicity. They believe that eternity—using the term in its vastest and unlimited meaning—is divided into alternate periods of cosmic manifestation and of reabsorption into the essence of Brahm. This period of manifestation is the duration of the life of the universe in a material form; and there is no term in modern Western nomenclature which corresponds with it; it must be accepted as a Hindoo metaphysical idea. This putting forth of the material universe, with its suns and stars and systems, out of the sea of non-existence in space, is called the outbreathing of Brahma; and the corresponding period of sleep or reabsorption into the essence of Brahm—which is so near to nothingness that it may as well be called that—is the inbreathing of Brahma. This outbreathing is called a kalpa, and the outbreathing and the inbreathing are also called respectively a day and a night of Brahma; and, according to the figures accepted throughout India, these periods of time occupy each 4,320,000,000 mortal years, thus making a day and a night of Brahma 8,640,000,000 years. The system of reckoning by which this result is obtained is most interesting, embracing, as it does, the various periods or ages of the world called yugas, and the reigns of the Manus; but the limits of this chapter forbid a detailed account of these minor calculations. The duration of a "year of Brahma," however, is found by multiplying the mortal years in one "day" and "night" by 360,—not 365, as that system of reckoning is not used with reference to the gods,—and the result is 3,110,400,000,000 years. As an "age of Brahma" is one hundred "years of Brahma," the last sum multiplied by 100 gives the awful period of the Maha Kalpa, 311,040,000,000,000 years,

at the mere mention of which the imagination of even a Hindoo staggers, for no one but the sages attempt to reckon farther. They do say, however, that this stupendous period (itself composed of minor periods of outbreathing and inbreathing as shown above) is followed by a corresponding period of deathlike sleep, at the end of which the universe again emerges to go through the whole program again.

VISHNU AND LAKSHMI

WE NOW come to the second person of the Hindoo trinity, Vishnu the Preserver, and in the popular Hindoo theogony he is a much more interesting and important figure than Brahma, because he is less abstract and therefore much nearer to the individual life. He is the god of many avatars, is known by a thousand names, and has in his charge the incarnations of men and monads.



Vishnu, like all the other Hindoo gods, is variously represented. One interesting plate shows him reclining on a flower, with Lakshmi, his consort—the Indian Venus—at his feet; while from his navel

springs a lotus, on which sits the four-armed Brahma. The whole group is supported by the winding coils of the seven-headed serpent Ananta, symbol of eternity, and floats—like Narayana—upon the sea of undifferentiated world-substance. This is the highest conception of Vishnu, and varies but little from the version of the Scanda Purana, which relates that “when the whole earth was covered with water, and Vishnu lay extended asleep on the bosom of Devi, a lotus arose from his navel, and its ascending flower soon reached the surface of the flood; that Brahma sprang from that flower, and, looking round without seeing any creature on the boundless expanse, imagined himself to be the first born, and entitled to rank above all future beings; yet, resolved to investigate the deep, and to ascertain whether any being existed in it who could controvert his claim to preëminence, he glided down the stalk of the lotus, and finding Vishnu asleep, asked loudly who he was. “I am the first born,” answered Vishnu; and when Brahma denied his primogeniture, they had an obstinate battle, till Mahadeva (Siva) pressed between them in great wrath, saying, “It is I who am truly the first born; but I will resign my pretensions to either of you who shall be able to reach and behold the summit of my head, or the soles of my feet.” Brahma instantly ascended; but having fatigued himself to no purpose in the regions of immensity, yet loath to abandon his claim, returned to Mahadeva, declaring that he had attained and seen the crown of his head, and called as his witness the first born cow. For this union of pride and

falsehood, the angry god ordained that no sacred rites should be performed to Brahma, and that the mouth of the cow should be defiled, and a cause of defilement, as it is declared to be in the oldest Indian laws. When Vishnu returned, he acknowledged that he had not been able to see the feet of Mahadeva, who then told him that he was first born among the gods, and should be raised above all. It was after this that Mahadeva cut off the fifth head of Brahma, whose pride occasioned his loss of power and influence in the countries bordering on the river Cali.”*

But, to return to Vishnu, it is as the god of the ten avatars, or appearances on earth, that he becomes the favorite subject of Indian poetry. Whenever the world has been in danger and has needed the presence of the Preserver, Vishnu has incarnated to save it, and these avatars have probably inspired more poetry than has any other one subject. There is some disagreement as to the order of these avatars, but the following arrangement is the one most generally accepted.

The first incarnation, called the Matsya, or Fish Avatar, was for the purpose of recovering the Vedas, the sacred books of India, which had been stolen by demons and buried in the waters of a deluge that then covered the world. It is interesting to note in passing that in every system of mythology, from the Hindoo to the American Indian, there is reference to a great deluge; and Noah has his correspondences in every one of them. The Hindoos believe that in the reign of the seventh Menu Satyavrata, the whole world and mankind having become corrupt, were destroyed by a flood, and that only the Menu, with the seven Rishis and their wives, were saved. The salvation was effected by Vishnu, who commanded them to enter a spacious vessel accompanied by pairs of all the animals. Then Vishnu, taking the form of a great horned fish, commanded that the ark should be fastened by a cable, composed of a serpent, to his mighty horn, that it might thus be secure until the flood subsided. Brahma and Vishnu then slew the monster, Hya-griva, who had stolen the Vedas while Brahma lay asleep at the end of a kalpa, and had thus caused the world to fall into the depths of ignorance and sin. Having recovered the Vedas, Vishnu the Preserver caused the world to be repopled with pious inhabitants, descendants of the good Menu Satyavrata and the seven Rishis. The story of this avatar is the subject of the first Purana.

The second grand avatar of Vishnu is called the Kurma or Tortoise Avatar, and a detailed study of this legend will well repay any one inter-

* Moor's "Hindu Pantheon." The real meaning of this legend is written on its face, and refers not to a battle for supremacy between the principles of creation, preservation, and destruction, but to a battle for supremacy between the three rival sects of the Hindoos, and the ultimate loss of influence of the worshipers of Brahma.

ested in religious symbolism. Only a short account of it, however, can be given here, and the existence of its hidden symbolism but briefly pointed out. For the purpose of restoring to man some of the treasures that were lost in the flood, Vishnu is said to have reincarnated in the form of a giant tortoise. Then, placing upon his back the mountain Mandara, the world-pillar, and winding about the pillar the serpent Vasoky, symbol of eternity, Vishnu called to the gods and demons, with whose assistance he churned the sea (of milk) for the recovery of the Amrita, or beverage of immortality. In this churning, the head of the serpent was held by the demons and its tail by the gods; and as the result of it, fourteen precious things were obtained: 1. The Moon, Chandra, hereinafter described. 2. Lakshmi, goddess of beauty and wealth who became the spouse of Vishnu. 3. Sura, wine; or Suradevi, the goddess of wine. 4. Oochisrava, the eight-headed horse, whose name means great hearing, and the symbolism of which has been referred to a state of mental perception corresponding, according to the Indian scale, with the sense of hearing. 5. Kustubha, Vishnu's gem of inestimable value. 6. Parijata, a tree that yielded everything desired. 7. Surabhi, a cow similarly bountiful. 8. Dhanwantra, a physician, the Hindoo Æsculapius. 9. Iravat, the elephant of Indra, with three proboscides. 10. Shank, a shell conferring victory on whoever should sound it. 11. Danusha, an unerring bow. 12. Bikh, poison, or drugs. 13. Rhemba, the apsara or nymph, a beautiful and amiable woman. 14. Amrita, the beverage of immortality, for the securing of which the above-described ceremony is said to have been performed. Six hundred million other nymphs, or apsaras, were churned out of the sea at the same time; they became attached to the celestial court of the god Indra, and are renowned among the Hindoos for their beauty and the grace of their dancing.

After these treasures had been churned out of the sea, the serpent Vasoky began to spit venom, which blinded the demons, thus leaving all the Amrita, or water of immortality, to be drunk by the gods.

The eight-headed horse, the all-yielding tree, and the three-trunked elephant are supposed to belong to Indra; and it is worthy of note, by one interested in comparative mythology, that Lakshmi, the Hindoo Venus, was, like the Venus of the Greeks, born of the froth of the sea.

The third avatar of Vishnu was in the form of Varaha the Boar. Vishnu is here represented as four handed, armed as usual, and with the head of a boar, on whose tusks rests a crescent containing in its concavity an epitome of the earth, which Vishnu had descended into the great deep to bring up after it had been immersed in the ocean as a punishment for the iniquities of its inhabitants. This avatar, like the two preceding, seems to have reference to the general deluge. There is another legend

regarding this Varaha Avatar which relates that a certain daitya (demon), having performed various acts of devotion and having spent a lifetime in religious austerities, had thereby earned the right to demand of Brahma any boon that he might wish. With the lack of modesty usual in his class, he demanded universal empire and freedom from danger through noxious animals, which he carefully enumerated one by one; but, notwithstanding his precautions, he forgot to name the boar, which accident resulted in his ultimate undoing. Brahma, being unable to refuse a boon to one who had earned the right to ask it by religious austerities, granted the prayer of the demon and gave him dominion over the earth and over all the animals he had enumerated. Thereupon the daitya seized the earth that had become his own, and plunged with it to the bottom of the sea. This legend is especially interesting as illustrating the statement so often made in Eastern books that the gods can refuse nothing to the devotee who has earned the right to ask, be he deva or daitya, black or white magician. The legend goes on to say that Vishnu, in order to save the earth from the clutches of this demon, took on the form of the boar, which was the one noxious animal his enemy had forgotten to enumerate, and, descending into the abyss, had a contest with him that lasted a thousand years; at the end of which time he killed the demon and brought up the earth at the point of his tusks.

The fourth avatar was as Nara-Singha, or the man-lion, and the necessity for it was brought about in the following way: Lakshmi, the beloved sacti of Vishnu, weary of peace, desired to see a battle, and expressed her wish to Vishnu, who, to gratify her curiosity, caused two of his servants to insult the holy Rishis, who were then approaching to do reverence to himself. He then banished the offenders from his presence, and told them that they might expiate their crime, either by seven incarnations in the bodies of faithful Vaishnavas (followers of Vishnu), or by three incarnations in the bodies of daityas (demons). The unfortunate servants chose the latter alternative, and it was in one of these incarnations as the demon Hiranyakasipu that one of them was slain by Vishnu as Nara-Singha, or the man-lion. The Hiranyakasipu spent ten thousand years in acts of religious austerity, then claimed at the hands of Brahma the usual boon, universal dominion; and the request for exemption from danger he carefully framed so as to protect himself from the misfortunes that had befallen other daityas. He demanded to be exempt from death at the hands of god or man; that no noxious animal should hurt him; and this was to protect him by day or night, within doors or without, in heaven or on earth. Secure in these endowments, he became so arrogant that his conduct was no longer to be borne; so Vishnu, to gratify Lakshmi's desire for a battle and also to rescue mankind, descended to the earth in the form of Nara-Singha, the man-lion. The wicked demon

had a virtuous son, Paraladha, who reasoned with him one day on the impiety of his conduct, calling his attention to the omnipresence of Vishnu. "What!" cried the demon, "is he in this pillar?" — pointing to a pillar that stood on the threshold of the house. Being answered in the affirmative, he smote the pillar with his sword in blasphemous defiance; whereupon Vishnu, in a form half-man, half-lion, burst from the severed pillar; and as it was evening, which is neither day nor night, and the pillar was neither within doors nor without, the man-lion lifted the blasphemous demon from the ground, where he was neither in heaven nor on earth, and proceeded to rend him in pieces. Thus did Vishnu elude the covenant of Brahma, satisfy the curiosity of Lakshmi to see a battle, rescue the world from the tyrant, and once more prove his godship as the preserver of the universe. These first four avatars were in the earliest age, the Satya Yuga of the Hindoos, which corresponds to the "golden age" of other mythologies.

The fifth avatar of Vishnu is known as the Vamana, or Dwarf Avatar, and occurred in the second age, the Turya Yuga. One Maha Beli, a virtuous monarch, was about to complete the hundredth grand sacrifice, by virtue of which he would have earned the right to demand of Brahma the usual boon, the sovereignty of the universe — earth, heaven, and hell. But Maha Beli was so elated by his grandeur that Vishnu, ever on the watch for danger to the universe of which he is preserver, feared that any added power given to that raja might be a menace to the gods. So he assumed the form of a wretched Brahmin dwarf and appeared before the raja as a mendicant. Maha Beli asked the dwarf what boon he desired, and the dwarf demanded as much territory as he could cover in three steps. Though urged by Beli to demand some gift more worthy of a monarch's munificence, the dwarf refused to ask more than three paces; but he required a ratification of the king's promise by a ceremony common in India, that of pouring water over the hand of the applicant. As the water from the king's pitcher fell upon the hand of the dwarf, his meager form expanded till it filled the world; and Vishnu, now appearing in his own person, deprived Beli of two steps of heaven and earth; but as the raja was on the whole a virtuous monarch, Vishnu left hell still in his dominion. In this character of the dwarf, Vishnu is sometimes called Trivikrama, the three-step-taker; and there is a fable that the stream poured over his hand by Beli became the river Ganges.

The sixth avatar of Vishnu was as Parasu Rama. There is some complexity in the Rama legends, as Vishnu is said to have incarnated in the person of three Ramas, youths of perfect beauty, named respectively Bala Rama, Parasu Rama, and Rama Chandra; though only the two latter names are given in the many lists of his avatars that the author has consulted. This complexity seems to have puzzled most students, and an

examination of a dozen good authorities does not show one writer who has satisfactorily explained it. As there has been considerable speculation on this point, it is mentioned here, as of educational value, instead of being passed over in silence.

Moor's "Hindu Pantheon," which has been made the basis of many, if not most, of the subsequent English versions of the Avatar legends, including those in Balfour's "Cyclopedia of India," quotes Sir W. Jones ("Asiatic Researches"), to the effect that Rama is the same as the Grecian Dionysius, who is said to have conquered India with an army of satyrs commanded by Pan. Parasu Rama was a mighty conqueror, and had an army of large monkeys (or satyrs) commanded by Hanuman. This monkey-god is a favorite subject of Hindoo fable, and Edward Moor and others have reproduced many interesting pictures illustrating his various exploits. The name Hanuman is said to mean *with high cheek-bones*, or bloated cheeks, and refers to the fabled origin of the monkey-god from Pavan, regent of the winds. The genealogy of the various Hindoo gods is most interesting and suggestive, and a study of it will well repay any student interested in the philosophy and psychology of myths. A valuable work on this subject is the "Genealogy of the South-Indian Gods," by Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, 1713. This book has been freely translated from the original German, and annotated, by G. J. Metzger; and though both the writer and the translator were missionaries, they have treated the "heathen" gods with perfect fairness and comprehension.

Parasu Rama was the son of Jamadagni, one of the Rishis, who had been intrusted by Indra with the wonderful cow of Surabhi—she who was churned out of the sea by Vishnu in the Kurma or Tortoise Avatar, as before related. A certain Raja Durij, who desired to possess the animal, slew the Rishi and attempted to seize the cow, which disappeared. The mother of Parasu burned herself on the funeral pile of her husband the Rishi, as is sometimes done by Hindoo widows; and as the supplications of a sati (a woman who so immolates herself) must be answered by the gods, the prayers of Runeka for revenge were answered by Vishnu, who took possession of the body of the sati's son, Parasu Rama, and in that avatar overcame and slew the Raja Durij, who had twenty arms. The pictures of this avatar generally represent the combat between Parasu Rama and the Raja with the twenty arms, some of which are scattered about, severed by the weapon of his semi-divine opponent. Thus this avatar is often called the Battle-ax Incarnation, and is semi-historical in its character, illustrating the battle for supremacy between the warrior-caste and the Brahmins.

The seventh avatar is that of Rama Chandra, and a heroic description of his life and battles may be found in the Ramayana, which also

recounts, though with less detail, the exploits of the other two Ramas above mentioned. In this avatar, Vishnu appears in the person of a courageous and virtuous prince, and delivers the world from the tyranny of Ravana, King of Lanka or Ceylon, another being with twenty hands and universal empire. Lakshmi, consort of Vishnu, was incarnated at the same time in the person of Sita, to whom Rama Chandra was married. Ravana, after he had failed in the contest of bending the bow, which was instituted as a trial for Sita's hand, seized upon the lady and carried her off while Rama was engaged in hunting. Then Rama, calling to his aid Hanuman, the monkey-god of the next previous avatar, set out to recover his spouse. Hanuman, with his army of apes, built a bridge from the continent of India to Ceylon, the kingdom of the wicked Ravana, and over this bridge the army of Rama passed. After a fierce contest he overcame and slew the tyrant, and rescued Sita. It then became necessary to prove that she had not been subjected to any insult at the hands of Ravana, which was done by means of the ordeal of fire; after which successful vindication of character she was reunited to Rama amid the congratulations of Hanuman and his army of apes. Dr. Paul Carus says that these stories describe the wanderings of the sun-god in search of his consort, the moon; and, as Chandra is the Hindoo moon and is the name of the goddess of that satellite, there seems to be some foundation for the assertion, which is also made by other writers.

The eighth avatar was in the person of Krishna, "the dark-skinned one," and is said to have contained the plenitude of Vishnu's power and glory. In his other avatars Vishnu assumed but a portion of his divinity, while Krishna was Vishnu himself in mortal mold. So many and varied are the legends connected with the romantic history of Krishna, that volumes would be needed to recount them. Probably the most generally famous of the literary compositions inspired by this man-god is the dialogue between "The Divine One" (Krishna) and Arjuna, called the Bhagavad-Gita, from the Mahabharata. A few of the more important stories relating to Krishna's life are here briefly given.



Kansa, King of Mathura, received a prophecy that the eighth child of his sister Devaki would deprive him of his life and throne. He thereupon gave orders that all the children of Devaki should be killed. But when the eighth child, Krishna, was born, he spoke at once after his birth, instructing his father, Vasudeva, how to save him from the wrath of Kansa. According to his own orders, he was carried by his father across the river Jamuna, protected by Sesha, the serpent of immortality, and was exchanged for the newborn daughter of a cowherd named Nanda. Kansa, the tyrant king, learning of the fraud that had been played upon him in the exchange of the peasant girl-baby for the son of

his sister, determined to have all the babies in the empire slain, but Krishna escaped this and many other dangers. A daitya (demon) nurse was sent to poison him with her milk; but, instead, he sucked her life away. He slew the giant serpent Kalinaga, killed the great bird that tried to put his eyes out, and during his childhood performed numerous other feats of daring. Many of the pictures of Krishna show him attended by the Gopia (generally nine), who are said to be shepherd girls, and by most students of comparative mythology are identified with the nine Muses; for Krishna is the Hindoo Apollo. Radha, one of these Gopia girls, was Krishna's first and favorite love; she has been deified by the Hindoos, and her image is set up in the temples and worshiped at the festivals with that of her lord and master.

Krishna is said to have had sixteen thousand and eight wives and more than one hundred and sixty thousand children. So perfect was his ability for duplicating himself and being in many places at once, and so impartial was he in his attentions, notwithstanding his devotion to Radha, that each of these sixteen thousand and eight women believed herself the exclusive favorite of her lord. The cultured devotee will tell the inquirer that these marriages of Krishna are symbolical, and such is doubtless the fact in this case, as in all others relating to the mythology of the Hindoos.

The great efforts of Krishna's life seem to have been directed toward the opposition of the worship of Siva, the destroyer; and of Indra, god of the firmament, hurler of the thunderbolt, etc., the Jupiter Pluvius of the Hindoo pantheon. In connection with his opposition to Indra comes the much-quoted story of the lifting of the mountain Govardhana. Indra, enraged with jealousy at the diminution of his own votaries and sacrifices consequent to the growing adoration of Krishna, sent a terrific storm to destroy the objects of his wrath. Thereupon Krishna uplifted on his little finger the mountain Govardhana (the Hindoo Parnassus), to shelter himself and the Gopia from the fury of the jealous Indra. There are many interesting pictures of this feat, which the votaries of Krishna take quite seriously.

But it is Krishna the warrior who is the favorite subject of Hindoo song. The great Mahabharata epic is a record of the wars in which he was interested; the eighteenth Purana is given up to a record of his life; and he has also been the inspiration for other works too numerous to mention. The prediction made to the tyrant Kansa before the birth of Krishna was finally verified, for the "holy one" marched against Kansa, slew him, and took possession of his throne. In these wars of his, whenever he got in a tight place, Krishna called to his aid his own miraculous powers as an incarnation of Vishnu. At one time, when in great jeopardy from the wrath of some of his numerous enemies, he produced

an immense snake, which received and sheltered in its capacious stomach the god himself, his flocks and herds and shepherds. Lack of space forbids the retelling of more of these stories of Krishna, though they might be continued indefinitely.

The ninth incarnation of Vishnu has been the subject of even more disputes than the others, but it is now generally regarded by European scholars as referring to the person of Gautama, called the Buddha, who lived in the sixth century before Christ. As the reader will find in our article "Buddha," in the department of Legends in this volume, a very full account of the most generally accepted story, we need not here go further into the details of his life than to say that he was a reformer of the old Brahminical religion, which had fallen into many abuses, and that he was the founder of Buddhism, a religion that now numbers more adherents than any other in the world. As the savior of the East from idolatry and priestcraft, Buddha certainly lived up to the accepted idea of the purpose of Vishnu's various incarnations—the preservation of the world. Many of those who deny that Buddha was the ninth avatar of Vishnu, say that Bala Rama was the eighth avatar and Krishna the ninth.

The tenth or Kalki avatar is yet to come. At the end of the Kali or Iron Age (the present age according to Hindoo reckoning): "Thoughtless men shall begin to commit acts deserving of hell; and the destruction of castes shall be continued. Then shall virtue and religion disappear, and scarce a single school remain; and barbarians, under the forms of kings, externally arrayed in justice, but internally composed of injustice, shall devour the people. But at length shall Vishnu appear as Kalki (the winged white horse), destroy the barbarians, and reëstablish the pure customs which depend on a due observance of the duties prescribed to castes and to the four classes: after which shall Hari (Vishnu) return to heaven; and the Satya Yug (golden age), then returning, shall restore the world to purity, virtue, and piety." The pictures of this expected avatar represent the white horse with one foot raised. When he places the foot down, the time of the incarnation will be fulfilled.

But this orderly arrangement of the Vishnu avatars does not go undisputed. There are tribes of Hindoos who deny that Krishna was an incarnation of Vishnu, and who call him "an impious wretch, a merciless tyrant, an incarnate demon, now expiating his crimes in hell." It is obviously impossible in an article of this character to enter into all the arguments pro and con in regard to every story. It would be as if a person of another faith, or no faith, in writing of the Christian religion, should try to analyze all the minor points of its almost innumerable creeds and *isms*.

In telling the principal stories of Vishnu, enough has been said of his spouse, Lakshmi, to give a general idea of her place in Hindoo mythology.

As said above, she is the Hindoo Venus, and like Venus she was born of the sea. As the mother of the world, the followers of Vishnu call her Ada Maya, and she has many other names corresponding to the various incarnations or avatars of her lord. Like Venus, Lakshmi is not always scrupulously correct in her conduct, and Major Moor asserts that it was she who was sent by Indra to tempt the sage Viswamitra, of whose growing power the sky-god was jealous. He seems to have confused her with the Apsara, nymphs of a lower order; but as Major Moor is the authority on which many later writers on the subject have based their knowledge, his version of the story is worthy of consideration.

Lakshmi is also the goddess of fortune and of abundance. In the latter character she corresponds to Ceres, and in some ancient temples she is represented with a cord twisted under her arm, like a horn of plenty. There are innumerable stories of this goddess, some of them giving interesting accounts of intermarriages between the members of the triad and their spouses, but to give them without full explanations would be only confusing.

As the peacock is the vehicle of Saraswati, so Garuda, the eagle, half-man, half-bird, is the vehicle of Lakshmi and her lord Vishnu. Garuda is a bird of considerable importance among the Vaishnava sect, and many representations of him are to be found in Hindoo art. He has various epithets, such as *foe of serpents*, *favorite bird of Hari*, *lord of birds*, *swift as wind*, etc. He is a younger brother of Aruna, the chariot-eer of the sun-god. He is placed at the entrance of the Hindoo Garden of Eden; and, in this character of destroying angel, he resists the approach of the serpent, which in most systems of poetic mythology seems to be the beautiful, insinuating, deceitful form in which Sin originally appeared. There are innumerable legends of Garuda, but lack of space bars them from this article.

SIVA

THE third person of the Hindoo trinity, Siva the Destroyer, may, roughly speaking, be said also to represent the end of the world and its regeneration. He is the all-devouring fire, and is often represented dancing in a flaming wheel. The worshipers of Siva, called the Saiva sect, are more numerous than any other class of Hindoo religionists. Balfour is authority for the statement that nearly all the Rajput races, most of the Hindoos in the valley of the Ganges, and three-fourths of all the Hindoos in the south of India, worship the god Siva, in some of his emblematic forms. As the Vaishnava sect make Vishnu often coincide with Brahma, so the Saivas endow the special god of their worship with

many of the attributes of the god of creation. Vishnu is water, Siva is fire; each is exalted as the Supreme.

Siva, or Mahadeva, as he is often called, is Time, the Sun, Fire, the Destroyer, the Generator, god of Justice, god of a thousand names, etc. He is white, as is also his vehicle, the bull, probably as emblematical of justice. He is sometimes seen with two hands, sometimes



with four, eight, or ten; and in a few instances he has five faces. In his forehead is a third eye, which is sometimes seen also on the foreheads of his wife and children. The serpent, as the emblem of immortality, is common to many of the Hindoo gods, but Siva is most abundantly bedecked with them. They are twisted in his hair, bound round his neck, his arms, his legs, and his fingers; and from his neck generally depends a long chain of grinning human skulls. The trident, called Trisula, similar to that of Neptune, is generally pictured in his hand, and he is often seen with a rope for strangling incorrigible sinners; though this emblem of his lordship is oftener seen in the hands of his spouse, Kali. Siva's loins are wrapped in a tiger skin, and on his headpiece is often seen the smiling face of the river goddess Ganga, who is Siva's daughter.

The devout Saivas declare that the source of the river Ganga (Ganges) is in Siva's hair; which is very poetic, to say the least. There is another legend, devoutly believed by the Vaishnavas, that the river Ganga flowed originally from Vishnu's foot, whence it descended upon the hair of Siva. Another and even more interesting account of the birth of the Ganges, and of the appearance of Siva's third eye, is as follows: Parvati, Siva's spouse, on one occasion "placed her hands over the eyes of her amorous lord, which, they being the primary source of light, involved the universe in immediate darkness. She instantly removed them, but an instant with immortals is an age among men; and Siva, to avert the calamity of such lengthened gloom, placed a third eye in his forehead. Parvati, perceiving the mischief she was causing, removed her hands, and found them moistened with the perspiration of Siva's temples; and in shaking it off, the Ganges flowed from her fingers." Other legends make the Ganges arise from the water poured by Brahma over the feet of Vishnu; while still others declare that it sprang directly from the feet of Brahma.

Of Siva, in his character of Time, Paterson says, in "Asiatic Researches":—

"To Siva is given three eyes, probably to denote his view of the three divisions of Time: the past, the present, and the future. A crescent in his forehead portrays the measure of time by the phases of the moon; a serpent forms a necklace, to denote the measure of time by years; a sec-

ond necklace, formed of human skulls, marks the lapse and revolution of ages, and the extinction and succession of the generations of mankind. He holds a trident, to show that the three great attributes are in him assembled and united; in another hand is a kind of rattle called damaru, shaped like an hourglass, and I am inclined to think it was really at first intended as such, since it agrees with the character of the deity; and a sand *gheri* is mentioned in the Sastra, as one of the modes of measuring time."

Iswara is another of Siva's names, though it is also used with reference to both Vishnu and Brahma. The following extract from the "Asiatic Researches" will make clear this seeming confusion of appellations, and incidentally show something of the early relation between the Hindoo and the Egyptian mythologies: "Iswara in Sanskrit signifies Lord, and in that sense is applied by the Brahmans to each of their three principal deities, or rather to each of the forms in which they teach the people to adore Brahm, or the Great One; and if it be appropriated in common speech to Mahadeva, this proceeds from the zeal of his numerous votaries, who place him above their other two divinities. Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahadeva, say the Puranics, were brothers; and the Egyptian Triad, or Osiris, Horus and Typhon, were brought forth by the same parent, though Horus was believed to have sprung from the mysterious embraces of Osiris and Isis before their birth; as the Vaishnavas also imagine that Hara, or Mahadeva, sprang mystically from his brother Heri, or Vishnu. In the Hindoo mythology Brahma is represented of a red, Vishnu of a black or dark azure, and Hara (Siva) of a white complexion; but in that of Egypt, we find Osiris black, Horus white, and Typhon red. The indiscriminate application of the title Iswara has occasioned great confusion in the accounts which the Greeks have transmitted to us of Egyptian mythology; for the priests of Egypt were very reserved on subjects of religion, and the Grecian travelers had, in general, too little curiosity to investigate such points with scrupulous exactness. Since Osiris, however, was painted black, we may presume that he was Vishnu, who on many occasions, according to the Puranas, took Egypt under his special protection. Krishna was Vishnu himself, according to the most orthodox opinions. The title Sri Bhagavat, imparting prosperity and dominion, is given peculiarly to Krishna, or the *black* deity; and the *black* Osiris had also the titles of Sirius, Seirius, and Bacchus. It is related, indeed, that Osiris and Bacchus imported from India the worship of two divine bulls; and in that character he was Mahadeva, whose followers were pretty numerous in Egypt; for Hermapion, in his explanation of the hieroglyphics in the Heliopolitan obelisk, calls Horus the Supreme Lord and the author of Time. Now Iswara, or Lord, or Kali, or Time,

are among the distinguished titles of Mahadeva; and obelisks, or pillars, whatever be their shape, are among his emblems. . . . We must observe that the Egyptians feared and abhorred Typhon, or Mahadeva, in his character of the Destroyer; and the Hindoos also dread him in that character, giving him the name of Bhairava, or Tremendous. The Egyptian fable of his trying to *break the mundane egg* is applied to Mahadeva."

Obelisks, pyramids, and all other conical objects of whatever size or form, are symbols of Siva. Among other things, these symbolize fire, as the cone is the natural form of fire.

The home or seat of Siva is Mount Kalasa, the summit of one of the numerous peaks of the mystical mountain, Meru, which corresponds somewhat to Olympus; and he is represented as sitting there in state upon a tiger skin, with Parvati at his side, while ranged around him in respectful attitudes are Brahma, Vishnu on the eagle Garuda, Ganesa, and other important gods, while a group of celestial choristers make music for their delectation. Kal is another name of Siva in his character of Time, and the legend says that when Kal, or Time, shall have devoured all things, the three personified powers will likewise cease to exist; and Kal, devouring himself, will then also cease to be.

Siva's vehicle is a white bull, on which he is often seen riding. This bull is represented in many attitudes, sometimes as the supporter of the lotus, and sometimes bowed in adoration of fire and other symbols.

PARVATI

The spouse, or sacti, of Siva is of sufficient importance to be treated under a separate heading. To give all her names and attributes would be impossible in a short chapter, so we will only study her as Parvati, Bhavini, Kali, Durga, and Devor the goddess.



Parvati is the name borne by the goddess as the immediate companion or associate of her divine partner. She is the daughter of the mountain Himalaya, personified as a powerful monarch, and Mena, his wife; she is called "the mountain-born," and is said to have been married to Siva in a former state of existence. In many ways she corresponds to the Roman Juno; she has the same high spirit and majestic deportment. Her color is white, like that of Siva.

As Bhavini, the goddess is created Nature. In this character she is fabled to have been the mother of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva; but this hypothesis is rather confusing to the unmetaphysical Western mind. Bha-

vini transforms herself into a thousand shapes, and all-existing things are said to have been produced from her. She is sometimes called Ma, and is represented in a car drawn by lions, holding a drum, and having a towered coronet upon her head. A festival is held yearly in her honor, corresponding somewhat to our May-day festival, and falling on or near that day.

As Kali, or Time, she is a terrible and awesome goddess, charged with the execution of her husband Siva's dread decrees. She holds the rope with which unrepentant sinners are strangled; she is adorned with serpents; she revels in blood. Though human sacrifices are no longer made to her, there can be no doubt of the existence of the practice in former times. Siva is made to say, "The flesh of the antelope and the rhinoceros give my beloved delight for five hundred years." By a human sacrifice, attended by certain ceremonies, Kali is happy one thousand years; by a sacrifice of three men at one time she is made joyous for one hundred thousand years. The writer has before her a number of the incantations chanted at these sacrifices, but they are too terrible to be repeated. A few of the less awful lines, however, will give an indication of the character of these ceremonials:—

"Hail, Kali! Kali! Hail, Devi! goddess of thunder; hail, iron-sceptered goddess! Kali! Kali! Horrid-toothed goddess! eat, eat, destroy the malignant; bind, bind; seize, seize; drink blood; secure, secure. Kali! Kali!"

Major Moor says:—

"Let the reader picture to himself these wild declamations, accompanied by the potencies of scenic delusions, representing this goddess of horrid form, of gigantic proportions, smeared with blood, among the ravings of bedlamites and the outrageous clangor of discordant instruments; and imagine what an effect it must have on the timid minds of the trembling, affrighted multitude, and what a hold such a religion must have on the sensibilities of its votaries."

How different such a religious conception from the calm and exalted philosophy of Buddha, or the lofty speculations of Lao-Tsze!

In her character of Durga, the spouse of Siva is active virtue, and is represented with ten arms. In one hand she holds a spear, in another a sword, in a third the hair of a giant and the tail of a serpent twisted round him; and in others the trident, the discus, the ax, the club, the arrow, and the shield. Durga is the destroyer of giants, and this goddess of active virtue is said to have dispatched more human monsters than all the other Hindoo gods together. She also wears the chain of skulls seen on her husband Siva. Of Durga a poet has sung:—

"The elephant hide that robes thee, to thy steps
Swings to and fro; the whirling talons rend

The crescent on thy brow; from the torn orb
The trickling nectar falls, and every skull
That gems thy necklace laughs with horrid life.”

Sir William Jones has also sung of Durga, in a hymn addressed to the goddess: —

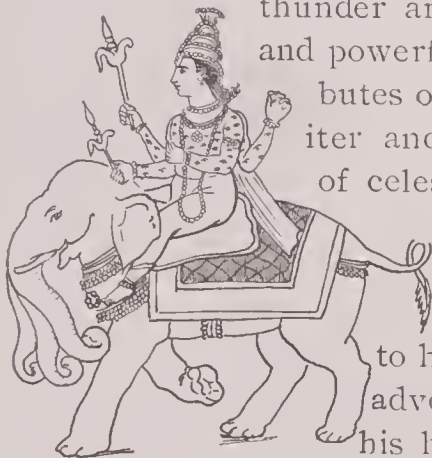
“O Durga! thou hast deigned to shield
Man's feeble virtue with celestial might,
Gliding from yon jasper field;
And, on a lion borne, hast brav'd the fight.
For when the demon Vice thy realms defy'd,
And arm'd with death each arched horn,
Thy golden lance, O goddess! mountain-born,
Touch'd but the pest — he roar'd, and died!”

Whatever opinion the reader may have of the above as poetry, it gives a very clear idea of the characteristics of Durga. An annual festival is held in honor of this goddess, during which all work and business are suspended, and universal pleasure and festivity prevail.

Devi, another name of Siva's spouse, is the feminine form of deva, god, and has been adopted by the Saiva sect as a special appellation of the goddess of their worship. So general is their use of it in this sense that it has been swerved somewhat from its original meaning as a generic term and made to have direct reference to Parvati, who, in her varied forms, is without exception the most important and widely worshipped of the many Hindoo goddesses.

INDRA

THERE is perhaps no Hindoo god except the members of the great triad so often mentioned in eastern works as Indra. He is the god of thunder and of the firmament, chief of the Devati, and an ancient and powerful rival of Vishnu and the other chief gods. The attributes of Indra correspond somewhat to those of the Roman Jupiter and the Scandinavian Thor. As Indra is the personification of celestial phenomena, he is called the king of immortals and lord of the firmament. He is oftenest represented as a white man, sitting upon his celestial *vahan*, or vehicle, the elephant; his body is covered with eyes, which he is said to have received as a punishment for certain very Jove-like adventures; he wears about his neck a triple necklace and on his head a crown, or decorated cap; in his two right hands (he is a four-armed deity) he carries varying symbols, while his two left hands are empty.



Indra is a very jealous god, and is said to be wroth when he observes sacrifices made to other deities. Some fanciful legends charge him with stealing the sacrificial objects offered to his rivals.

Indra's heaven is a place rivaling in splendor and sensuous beauty the Paradise of the Moslems. Poets describe its beautiful gardens:—

“Where Vayu* through the charming wood,
Forever creeps in gentlest mood:
Now o'er the blowing grass he goes,
Now stirs the fragrance of the rose.
Here many a flower of lovely hue,
Famed in the loves of former time,
Blooms glittering in the diamond dew,
And sweetening the heavenly clime.

“Young roses through the passing breeze,
To taste their sweets invite the bees.
Here fountains round the heavenly bowers
Perpetual fall, and glittering showers
Of diamonds, pearls, and stars descend,
And sweet celestial music lend
Unto the ears of mortals, blessed,
For pious deeds, with heavenly rest.”

Here, too, the antelope-eyed Apsara—the nymphs who, with Rembha their queen, the popular Venus of the Hindoos, were churned out of the sea by Vishnu during the Tortoise Avatar previously described—disport themselves, shedding the light of their inconceivable loveliness upon the happy dwellers in the celestial city of Amravati, where Indra's palace is situated in the garden Nandana. The Apsara bear some resemblance to the Norse Valkyrs, for, according to the belief of the worshipers of Krishna, they bear to Indra's heaven the souls of warriors slain in battle.

In the garden Nandana grow the all-yielding trees; and Hindoos make drawings of a curious tree of Indra's garden which bears men as fruit. Among Indra's other treasures are the all-yielding cow, the eight-headed horse, and the elephant Iravat, with three proboscides, which is Indra's own especial vehicle. These, also, were churned out of the ocean by Vishnu during the Tortoise Avatar. It seems worth while to say in passing that a study of the symbolism of this much-sung Kurma Avatar will repay any one seriously interested in religious symbolism, though this is not the place to enter into details with regard to it.

The Hindoos have assigned a regent to each cardinal and each intermediate point of the compass, also to three additional points, the above,

* God of winds.

the below, and the center. Indra, as god of the sky and first of firmamental deities, is regent of the east, while the other points are ruled as follows: Agni (god of fire), the southeast; Yama (god of death), the south; Nairitti (the dread earth-goddess), the southeast; Varuna (god of waters), the west; Vayu (god of winds), the northwest; Kuvera (god of wealth), the north; Isani (variously described, but generally as the earth-mother), the northwest; Brahma, the above; Sesh Naga (king of serpents), the below; and Rudra (a manifestation of Siva), the center—the “here” of the aboriginal American. Some accounts vary slightly from the foregoing; but the order here given is the one most generally accepted. Indra, by virtue of his office as god of the firmament, is lord of these deities when regarded as regents of the various points, and they have been referred to as his vassals.

The forty-nine Maruts, so often spoken of in connection with Indra, are personifications of the forty-nine winds. They are described as a child divided by Indra into forty-nine portions.

Indra, like most Hindoo gods, has many names, and the innumerable legends about him vary in many of their details; but the foregoing are the most generally accepted and the most important of his characteristics.

Perhaps the most beautiful conception of the god of the firmament is that aspect which has been called by Muir “Indha (the Kindler).” The following legend, called “The Love of Indra,” from Frederika Richardson’s “The Iliad of the East: A Selection of Legends Drawn from Valmiki’s Sanskrit Poem, The Ramayana,” is so beautiful that I quote it entire:—

THE LOVE OF INDRA

“‘The Breath which is in the midst is Indra. He, by his might, kindled other breaths in the midst: inasmuch as he kindled them, he is Indha (the Kindler).—Muir’s “Sanskrit Texts.”’

“‘HE WHO kindles’; Indra, God of Celestial Fire! It is he who troubles the air, and fires the clouds; it is he, also, who touches the thoughts of men with flame.

“Have you watched the changeful sky—crimson and gold, and amethyst, sinking into the depth of azure? It is the mantle of Indra. From its folds glance forth the beamy stars. He is called the god with the thousand eyes; for stars look out from the folds of his mantle.

“He rides on the snow-white elephant, Airavata, whom the storm lashed out from the foam of the sea. In his hand is Vajra, the thunder-bolt; the forked lightnings are his arrows.

“Have you heard the shriek of the east wind? Have you seen the trees wrenched up, and thrown, crushed, back to earth; the sand torn up in eddies, and the white salt dust of the sea flung in the face of heaven? It is the wrath of Indra.

"The sunlight is his laughter; when the clouds give their lives forth in rain, he is in grief.

"In earth or heaven, there is none like him. His beauty has the wistful passion of a man, and the splendor and might of a god. A flash of supernal fire, he has thrilled through the earth's dark places; he has learnt sorrow, and guilt, and desire; and the dark, wild heart of a man struggles through his divinity.

"('Let us worship with reverence the mighty Indra, the exalted, the undecaying, the youthful!')*

"In all nations, through all ages, he has been so worshiped. The celestial fire has not cooled, the 'Breath, that is in the midst' still kindles other 'breaths' to its heat. The god of sunlight or storm still bids the world dream or struggle, lust or aspire; and the great ocean of man's passions obeys him.

"There were some young maidens standing just on the threshold of life; for childhood is the vestibule merely; it is hung with pretty pictures, too, so that one does not look on to the world-chamber at the end until the glare, of a sudden, bursts on one, and one hears the uproar made by the overnumerous guests.

"Just at this point paused our young maidens, half awed by the tumult, half fascinated by all the movement and the light. It chanced that at this moment the gaze of Indra fell on them, and beholding them, so beautiful and so pure, he loved them. Flashing earthward, in a form of fire, he kissed them on the lips and left them with blanched cheeks, and eyes aflame. For they knew a god had been with them, and had thrilled them by his touch, and yet had winged his way back to his high home ere they had tasted aught of passion, save its first, sudden pain.

"So, with a fever on them, and a vague desire in their innocent breasts, seeking whom they knew not, what, they would not say, they wandered forth; and Love, who breathes only in the upper air, led them to a hilly country, where the large stars seemed smiling near.

"And there, still far beyond them, but looking down with deeply passionate eyes, they saw the great god, Indra; and he held out his large arms, wooing them to the fire of his embrace.

"The hearts of the young maidens failed them. Fain had each been to turn her back; but her soul within a sudden found its wings, and bore her, in a rush of superhuman ecstasy, to the arms of the enamored god. Thus, ignorant of the bitter cost to mortals, who press up, with quivering lips and heaving breasts, to meet the desires of the sons of heaven, did they receive the 'sorrowful great gift,' the Love of Indra.

"Bear me witness, ye who have tasted the kiss of fire, how closely anguish and rapture are interwoven here. Which is the greater I know not; the bliss and suffering strain all too fiercely the human brain and heart; yet who would cage his soul and bar it round with shade, if the

*Rig Veda.

sun-god claimed it of him, saying, 'Let my large pulses thrill thy being through, and draw thy spirit forth from thee in flame!'

"But our little maidens, having no previous knowledge of all an immortal's love involved, fretted against the crown Indra had laid on them; because, although it wrapped them in a light, it scorched and tore their smooth young brows, and mingled with its beams of gold the lifeblood of the wearers.

"'We are faint,' they said, 'and weary! The bloom has faded from our cheeks, and all the youth of our hearts is dying. Our eyes are tired with beauty, and light is but a splendid pain. Our hearts are spent with passion; this eternal rapture will destroy us. Oh, that we could rest! Rest, rest, from the fever of our lives, ere it exhausts our power, and we die!'

"So, one day when this longing for rest overcame them, they strayed from the Mountain of Meru, where the gods quaff sparkling nectar and hearken to the song that dies not, but flings forth the soul of its music half-way between hell and heaven, that merge their might and glory to swell this ocean of harmony.

"With their hands to their ears, the faithless brides of Indra fled from the witching strains, and sought the sheltered valleys, where life is calm, and men and women pass slowly through the stages of time, marking progress merely by the succession of seasons, and dying, at length, because they have dwelt too long, not lived too much. And in their wanderings they came upon the country of the Uttarakurus. Oh, that was a pleasant land, and surely just the spot where our weary fugitives might find the peace they longed for. There were no extremes of heat nor cold, no excess of light nor depth of gloom; all was equable and tempered calm—like the inhabitants themselves, whose dispositions were inaccessible to all violent emotions, which overstrain a delicate frame. There was no need for any exertion, either; for in a wood, called Chartraratha, hung from the boughs of the trees all that heart could desire—jewels, and raiment, and luxurious couches, and delicious viands of every description; one had only to walk thither and gather them. The flowers in this country were of gold, so were the mountains; the rivulets were so choked with gold that they slept between their banks and did not attempt to sing. The women who dwelt there were all youthful and lovely; the men were all courteous, and learned in saying pleasant things: old age, or disease, or poverty, or suffering, or grief, were not known here; it is probable that all such things were soaked away out of the land by the black and terrible river that swept with its sinister floods the borders of the Land of Gold, and rolled, muttering ever words of menace and despair—that were not understood by the smiling Uttarakurus.

"Amid this luxurious people the pale wanderers paused; and struck by their strange beauty and their wanness, born of an ardor unknown to any here, the inhabitants flocked around them, saying, 'stay with us and share our lives.'

“Then, at first, a pang of unsatisfied longing held back the souls where Indra had set his love. But, little by little, each sought to reason herself out of the memory of those rapturous moments spent up among the mountains.

“‘Help me to live it down!’ cried out each weary heart; and the appealing hands went forth, seeking for some stay.

“They met the smooth palms of the bland Uttarakurus. ‘Let us lead you along the path of pleasure,’ they said to the brides of Indra.

“But the beloved of the sun-god found no delight in the golden eountry, nor in the wood of Chartraratha, nor in the company of the smiling Uttarakurus. ‘Better to have died in a god’s embrace,’ they moaned, ‘than to erawl through the long days in the hateful city.’

“But they had made their choice; and Mahendra,* god of the firmament, has no weleome for renegades. In the heart of the Golden Land his curse found them out.

“‘Have ye forgotten,’ he cried to them, ‘how, in the low Hill Country, ye lay awhile on my breast, fainting almost with rapture, while the large stars were smiling near, and the night hung still around? Have ye forgotten how, pale and beautiful, ye stepped through the groves of Nandana; and how light robed ye in splendor; and the stars I had laid in your bosoms glowed there, and flamed with a glory that shamed the pale orbs of heaven? Why have ye thrown off your crowns, whose gems flashed through the ages, witnesses to the past and the future that ye were chosen as the spouses of Indra? What though your slight heads were bowed, and your fragile strength near broken; was not my arm around you? Who would not totter and fail, to be upheld by the amorous Indra? What though your spirits’ growth were too swift for your delieate frames? As guerdon for your shortened lives, my love had made ye immortal!

“‘But ye have loved ease better than glory! O foolish ones! ease can never be yours! Ye have tasted an immortal’s love, and your glory, ye have abandoned! Dwell, then, as exiles and strangers in this town ye have preferred to the mountains; and, since ye have dreaded the tempest, endure the torments of the ealm.’

“And so, in the city of the Uttarakurus, dwell these pale women with the lustrous eyes, who were once the beloved of Indra; and they hold no friendly intercourse nor have sympathy with any; each morning gives fresh birth to the wild desire that gnaws their hearts; each night finds them in a dread despair; for the pitiless curse of Mahendra drives them down to their un-honored graves.”

I have given this long legend entire because of its great beauty; because it illustrates, better than any other story known to me, the highest conception of Indra (as the inspirer and prototype of Apollo); and also as an example of the poetic imagination and lofty conceptions of the Hindoo mind.

* Another name of Indra.

GANESA

GANESA, who is said to be the eldest son of Siva and Parvati, is the Hindoo god of prudence and policy, patron of letters, guardian of gates, etc. Before beginning any undertaking, whether warlike or pacific, the pious Hindoo invokes the aid of Ganesa, and propitiates him by such salutations and other means as are supposed to please him. Balfour says that the Hindoo banker indites the words "Sri Ganesh" at the commencement of every letter; the warrior implores his counsel; the architect plans his image in the foundation of every edifice; and the figure of Ganesa is either sculptured or painted at the doors of houses as a protection against evil; and, in the southern part of India, it is set up by the wayside as a protection to travelers.



The god of prudence is represented as a short, fat, red-colored man, with the head of an elephant. As a frontispiece to Moor's "Hindu Pantheon" there is a large, handsome plate of Ganesa, which represents him seated in state upon a kind of throne which rests upon the back of a large, alert-looking rat. Behind him, and forming a part of the back of his throne or chair, is the five-headed serpent, and, crowning all, the serpent of eternity swallowing its tail. In this picture the elephant-headed god has the "third eye"* in the middle of his forehead, and in each of his four hands is a symbol. Many of the representations of Ganesa omit his vehicle, the rat; and there is some difference of opinion as to the meaning of this little animal. Ganesa is sometimes given four hands, sometimes six or eight, and in a few instances only two; one characteristic, however, is always shown—the elephant head, without which Ganesa would not be himself.

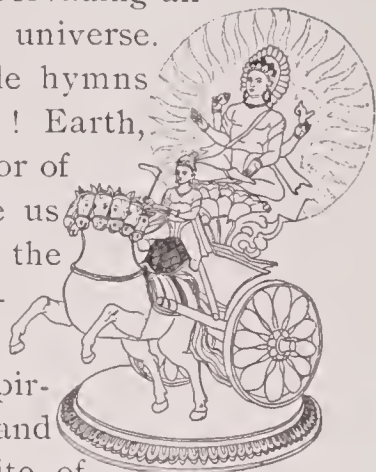
There are many legends about Ganesa, many of them reflecting somewhat upon the morality of the prudent god, but these, like nearly all Hindoo legends, are doubtless allegorical.

SURYA, ARUNA, AND CHANDRA

WHILE it has been said by many learned writers on mythology that all the principal gods of every mythological system are primarily sun-gods or moon-gods, yet in almost every system some one deity has been set apart as regent of the sun — or, to put the fact in a clearer and truer way, the animating spirit of the sun has come to be personified and designated by a special name.

*See Siva.

In this sense, the sun-god of the Hindoos is Surya, or Mitra, which is one of his Vedic names. The sun is regarded as divine, as pervading all things, as the soul of the world and the supporter of the universe. Surya, therefore, is reverently worshiped, and innumerable hymns are sung in his praise. The verse of the Rig Veda: "Om! Earth, air, heaven. Om! Let us meditate on the supreme splendor of the divine sun! May he illuminate our minds!" may give us either one of two ideas: The worship of the material sun as the center and life-giver of the material universe; or the adoration, by illuminated minds, of the "Spiritual Sun," the Atma, the central flame — call it what one will — of the universal spiritual life. It is just this twofold aspect — the external husk and the internal living life — which makes it so hard to write of Hindoo mythology *as such*, for one who has studied the inner and hidden meaning of the many seemingly trivial stories of the Indian gods and goddesses.



Sir William Jones, in speaking of Surya, says:—

"A plausible opinion has been entertained by learned men that the principal source of idolatry among the Ancients was their enthusiastic admiration of the sun; and that when the primitive religion of mankind was lost amid the distractions of establishing regal governments, or neglected amid the allurements of vice, they ascribed to the great luminary, or to the wonderful fluid of which it is the general reservoir, those powers of pervading all space and animating all nature which their wise ancestors had attributed to one eternal *Mind*, of which the substance of fire had been created as an animate and secondary cause of natural phenomena. The mythology of the East confirms this opinion; and it is possible that the *triple divinity* of the Hindoos was originally no more than a personification of the sun, whom they call . . . three-bodied, in his triple capacity of *producing* forms by his genial heat, *preserving* them by his light, or *destroying* them by the concentrated force of his igneous matter. This, with the wilder conceit of a *female power* united with the Godhead, and ruling nature by his authority, will account for nearly the whole system of Egyptian, Indian, and Grecian polytheism, distinguished from the sublime theology of the philosophers, whose understanding was too strong to admit the popular belief, but whose influence was too weak to reform it."

The following verses are fragments from a hymn to Surya, by the same author, and a reference to our illustration of Surya in his sun-chariot, whose seven-headed horse is driven by Aruna, will help to elucidate any points in the hymn which may not be clear to the reader:—

"Lord of the lotos, friend and king,
Surya, thy powers I sing:
Thy substance Indra, with his heavenly bands,
Nor sings, nor understands;

Nor e'en the Vedas three to man explain
Thy mystic orb triform, tho' Brahma tuned the strain.

First o'er blue hills appear,
With many an agate hoof,
And pasterns fringed with pearl, seven coursers green;
Nor boasts yon arched roof,
That girds the showery sphere,
Sweet heaven-spun threads of colored light serene,
As tinge the reins which Arun guides —
Glowing with immortal grace,
Young Arun, loveliest of Vinatian race;
Though younger he, whom Madhava bestrides,
When high on eagle-plumes he rides.
But, Oh! what pencil of a living star
Could paint that gorgeous car,
In which, as in an ark, supremely bright,
The lord of boundless light,
Ascending calm o'er the empyrean sails,
And with ten thousand beams his awful beauty veils."

Surya, too, has his spouse, who is generally called Prabha (meaning Brightness). It is said that, unable to sustain the pressure of the sun's intensity, she assumed another form named Chaya (Shade), and this impersonation of shade is sometimes called the spouse of Surya.

Surya, or the sun, is exclusively worshiped by a sect called Suras, or Sauras, who acknowledge no other god; but this sect is less numerous than the worshipers of Vishnu and Siva.

In connection with the sun-god, the twelve Aditya are often mentioned in Hindoo writings. These Aditya are said to be sons of Aditi, the universe, who is often called the mother of the gods. They are emblems of the twelve signs of the zodiac. Each sign is under the protection of a special god,—Varuna, Surya, Indra, Krishna, etc.; and it is by virtue of this office that the above-mentioned gods and their associates are called the Aditya.

Aruna, the charioteer of Surya, is the dawn, and he has been styled the Aurora of the Hindoos. He is a brother of Garuda, the eagle *vahan* of Vishnu, and is always represented as lame—generally with both legs cut off below the knee. There are various fables to account for this lameness, which is also characteristic of the charioteer of the Egyptian sun-god.

The principal moon-god of the Hindoos is Chandra, who is pictured in a car drawn by pied antelopes. As the moon, like almost everything else in Hindoo mythology, is regarded as both masculine and feminine, Chandra has his female counterpart, or spouse, who is called Chandri.

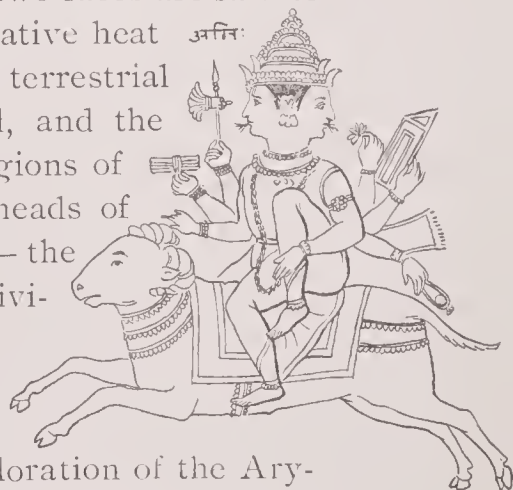
But the moon, by some Hindoos, is said to be all feminine, Chandri, and to be the spouse of Surya, the sun-god, by whom she has a numerous family. This confusion of sex is explained by one writer as follows: When the moon is in opposition to the sun, it is the god Chandra; but when in conjunction with that luminary, it is the goddess Chandri. The moon was also worshiped as both male and female by the Egyptians, between whose mythology and that of the Hindoos there are many remarkable correspondences. In some legends Chandra is said to have twenty-eight wives; these correspond with the lunar divisions of the zodiac, or the twenty-eight days of the lunar month. These goddesses all have their special names, and the legends concerning them would fill a volume. Isa and Isi, other names for the moon and his consort, are often found in Hindoo legends.

Each of the major planets has also its presiding spirit or god. Sani, or Saturn, is regarded by the astrologers of India as a malignant planet, and the god of that name has been assigned the ill-omened raven as his attendant. Major Moor has an interesting theory that the raven destroys its own young, and that for that reason it has been assigned to Sani, which, under his various names of Saturn, Kronos, and Time, is said in many systems of mythology to devour his own children. Vrihaspati, regent of the planet Jupiter, is an important person in Hindoo mythology. He is the preceptor or guru of the gods, and his name has been given to a cycle, the Vrihaspati mana, or year of Jupiter, during which he describes one sign of his orbit.

ELEMENTAL GODS

AGNI is the Hindoo god of fire. He is represented with two faces, three legs, and seven arms, and riding a ram. His two faces are said to symbolize the two fires, solar and terrestrial, or creative heat and destructive fire; his three legs, the three sacred terrestrial fires of the Brahmins—the nuptial, the ceremonial, and the sacrificial, or the influence of fire over the three regions of the universe; and his seven arms,—like the seven heads of Surya's horse or the seven horses of his chariot,—the seven colors of the solar spectrum, or the seven divisions of a ray of light.

To write exhaustively of Agni would be to give the history of Hindoo fire-worship from the remotest time, for this god divided with Indra the special adoration of the Aryans of Vedic times, the worship of Agni and Indra being older than the worship of the triad. About one-fifth of the hymns of the Rig Veda



refer to this god, and most of the ten books open with prayers addressed to him. He is one of the sons of Aditi, the universe, and his chief spouse is Swaha, who resembles the Vesta of the Romans.

Varuna, regent of waters, is also a very important god, and his worship antedates the Vedas. He is analogous to Neptune, is regent of the west, and one of the Aditya. He is lord of punishment, and to him are addressed prayers for protection from sin.

Vayu, god of the air, is also regent of the northwest, and as such is under the rule of Indra.

YAMA

YAMA, god of death and hell, is regent of the south, or lower world, in which the Hindoos place the infernal regions. The Indian representations of this deity are fanciful in the extreme. He is many-armed and mighty, and is worshiped, or feared, under various names. There is a very interesting legend about him in Professor Wilson's story of the Ramayana in our department of Legends, to which the reader is referred. Yama will outlive all the other gods, and will finally destroy Kal (Time) himself. Yama is often identified with Siva, as the destroyer.

KAMA

KAMA, god of love, takes the place of Cupid among the Hindoo deities. He is the personification of desire, and, according to the Hindoo genealogy of the gods, is a son of Maya, the universal attracting power. It is interesting to note that Maya also means *illusion*, and that Maya, or Ada Maya, is one of the names of Vishnu's spouse Lakshmi, who is the personification of attraction and the wife of the *preserver*. Ada Maya, as mother of all, by her attraction unites all matter, "producing love in animated nature, and in physics the harmonizing of atoms." There is an allegory of Kama being an avatar or son of Krishna and Rukmeni, other names of Vishnu and Lakshmi; and this is a further instance of the correspondence of Lakshmi with the Roman Venus, the mother of Cupid.



Kama (love) is married to Reti (affection), the usual attendant of the tender passion. He is represented as a beautiful youth, sometimes in conversation with his mother in the midst of beautiful gardens, sometimes riding by moonlight on a parrot, attended by dancing girls. His banner shows a fish on a red ground, and red is always the color of Kama.

The foregoing are the most important of the Hindoo gods and goddesses; but, as said at the beginning of this chapter, including the avatars of all the deities, the members of the Hindoo pantheon are innumerable. I have purposely avoided special reference to several names well known to students of Indian literature, because an explanation of them would lead me too deep into the subtleties of the metaphysical realm. Narayana, for instance, the spirit of God "moving on the waters," would, if touched at all, invite speculations out of place in a work of this character. So I have thought best to leave Narayana to his slumbers "on the waters."

As this is a paper on the Mythology of the Hindoos, as such, I have not paid much attention to the Vedanta and Theosophic philosophies which have their roots in it. To do so would be to write of the *philosophy* and *metaphysics* of the Hindoos, which are not, save remotely and collaterally, the subjects under discussion.

The present Hindoo religion is very different from the old Aryan religion of Vedic times. To quote a learned writer on the subject: "In Europe the Hindoo religion is a term which is always employed in a collective sense, to designate a faith and worship of an almost endlessly diversified description. An early division of the Hindoo system, and one conformable to the genius of polytheism, just as at present, is said to have separated the practical and popular belief from the speculative and philosophical doctrines. And while the common people addressed their hopes and fears to stocks and stones and multiplied by their credulity and superstition the grotesque objects of their veneration, some few of deeper thought and wider speculation plunged into the mysteries of man and nature and assiduously endeavored to obtain just notions of the cause, the character and the consequence of existence." These thoughts and speculations are embodied in numerous books on the Vedanta and Theosophic philosophies, and any reader of this article who desires to look for the spirit that animates the dry forms of this ancient religion is invited to seek for it along the lines indicated. Such a quest will amply repay the student, and may give him a glimpse, at least of the Great Mystery.

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CHINESE MYTHOLOGY

By CHARLES JOHNSTON

Thereafter he sacrificed specially, but with the ordinary forms, to God; sacrificed with reverent purity to the Six Honored Ones; offered their appropriate sacrifices to the hills and rivers; and extended his worship to the host of spirits.—*Shû King, Canon of Shun, B.C. 2300.*

FROM the dawn of Chinese history, the one God, High Heaven, or Divine Providence, under the name of Shang Ti, was the supreme object of worship. A temple was built to this Divinity four thousand five hundred years ago, by Hwang Ti, and all succeeding rulers of "the black-haired people" worshipped before his shrine. This Divinity brought down the mighty from their seats, and exalted the humble and meek: "Pride brings loss, and humility receives increase — this is the way of heaven;" says one of the oldest parts of the *Shû King*; "morning and night, be reverent, be upright, be pure. . . . oppress not the helpless, nor neglect the poor and needy."



There is the same note of pure reverence through all the oldest records of China. The great king Yü, in whose days came the Deluge, was thus addressed: "I see how great is your virtue, how admirable are your vast achievements; the determinate appointment of Heaven rests upon your person; you must eventually ascend to the throne of the great Sovereign." It is further said that "Heaven distinguishes the virtuous; Heaven punishes the guilty." Divine Providence interfered directly in the affairs of men; thus we read that "moved with indignation at the crime of King Show, Great Heaven charged King Wan to display his majesty, and destroy the tyrant." The revelation of Great Heaven is through conscience. Thus five-and-twenty centuries ago Confucius declared that "man has only to watch, listen to, understand, and obey, the moral sense implanted in him by Heaven, and the highest perfection is within his reach." He may acquire godlike wisdom, and "become the equal of Heaven."

Heaven, Earth and Man were the Trinity of the ancient Chinese;—the Three in One were full of life; the whole Universe was alive. Thus they recognized three categories of lives or “spirits”: the lives or spirits of Heaven, the lives or spirits of Earth, and the lives or spirits of Men. The Celestial Spirits were called Shan; the Spirits of the Earth were called Chi; the Spirits of Men, the manes, or surviving souls, were called Kwei. It is for this reason that we find in the ancient Canon of Shun, four thousand two hundred years old, the worship, first of God, High Heaven, the Great Divine; then of Six Celestial Spirits; then the offerings to the spirits of the hills and rivers,—living and breathing Nature, thrilling and throbbing with beauty; and lastly, the offerings to the hosts of spirits, the living souls of men who have passed through the gates of death.

ANCESTOR WORSHIP

THE most ancient hymns of the Shi King are the best and most trustworthy authority for the ancestor-worship of the ancient Chinese, and its meaning for them. Thus, in the Odes of Shang, which go back about three thousand five hundred years, we find this reverence for the spirits of the mighty dead. The first Ode is a service of song to the founder of the dynasty of Shang:—

“How admirable, how perfect
Are ranged our tympan and our drums;
The drums resound harmonious and loud,
To delight our meritorious ancestor.

“The descendant of Thang invites him with his music,
That he may bless us with realization of our desires.
Deep is the sound of our tympan and drums;
Shrilly resound the flutes. . . .”



Thang, the founder of the dynasty, is conceived as present, a living spirit, delighting in music, and ready to bless his dutiful descendant. The sense of his real, though bodiless presence, is as clear as possible. It is the same in the second Ode:—

“Oh, our meritorious ancestor!
Permanent are the blessings coming from him;
Repeatedly conferred without end,
They have come to you in this place. . . .”

“From Heaven is our prosperity sent down,
Fruitful years of great abundance.
He will come and enjoy our offerings,
And confer on us boundless happiness.”

In the fifth Ode of the same series, in honor of Wu Ting, king of Yin, we can see the whole development of ancestor-worship, beginning with the deeds of a warlike monarch, and ending with the building of a temple in his honor:—



“Rapid was the warlike energy of the king of Yin,
Vigorously did he attack Ching Chu;
Boldly he entered its dangerous passes,
And brought the multitudes of Ching together,
Till the country was quite brought under control,—
Such was the fitting prowess of the descendant of Thang!

“(The monarch Wu Ting said:—)
‘Ye people of Ching Chu!
Dwell in the southern part of my kingdom!
Formerly, in the time of Thang the successful,
Even from the Chiang of Ti,
They dared not but come with their offerings;
They dared not but come to seek recognition.
Such is the regular rule of Shang.’

“The capital of Shang was full of order,
The model for all parts of the kingdom,
Glorious was the fame of him;
Brilliant was his energy.
Long he lived, and enjoyed tranquillity,
And so he preserves us, his descendants. . . .

“We ascended the hill of Ching,
Where the pines and cypresses grow symmetrical;
We cut them down and conveyed them here,
We reverently hewed them square.
Long are the projecting beams of pine;
Large are the pillars in their ranks.
The temple is completed,—
The tranquil abode of the warlike king of Yin.”

This monarch reigned from 1324 to 1266, B.C., and is in every sense fully historical. In exactly the same way other great men of China's past were raised to divine honors and immortal dignity. Among these, as a conspicuous benefactor of the race, stands out Hau Chi, the minister of King Yü of the Deluge, who reigned from 2205 to 2197, B.C. Hau Chi is honored as the patron of agriculture, and the story of his birth,

childhood, and discovery of grain is thus told in the first of the second Decade of Major Odes:—

“The first birth of our people
Was from Chiang Yüan—
How did she give birth to our people?
She had presented a pure offering and sacrificed,
That her childlessness might be taken away. . . .
She gave birth to a son and nourished him:
This was Hau Chi. . . .

“He was placed in a narrow lane
But the sheep and oxen guarded him with loving care;
He was placed in a vast forest,
Where he was found by woodcutters;
He was placed on the cold ice,
And a bird covered him and upheld him with her wings;

“When he was able to crawl,
He looked majestic and intelligent;
When he was able to feed himself,
He fell to planting beans;
The beans grew luxuriantly,
His rows of rice shot up beautifully.
His hemp and wheat grew strong and close,
His gourds yielded abundantly.

“The husbandry of Hau Chi
Was founded on the principle of helping;
Having cleared away the thick grass,
He sowed the ground with yellow corn.
He tended the living grain,
Until it was ready to burst,
Then he sowed it again, and it sprang up,
It grew and came into ear,
It waxed strong and good, hanging down every grain complete,
And thus he was appointed lord of Thâi.”

The lordship of Thâi, intrusted to this worthy minister, is now a part of Shen-Si, the central province on the northern boundary of China, the seat of Si Ngan Fu, the ancient metropolis. The fourth of the Praise Odes of Lû tells the same story; its spirit is so full of simple reverence that we give it in full:—

“How pure and still are the solemn temples,
In their strong solidity and minute completeness!
Highly distinguished was Chiang Yüan of unbending virtue.

God regarded her with favor, and without injury or hurt,
 When her time was fulfilled, she gave birth to Hau Chi.
 On him were conferred all blessings!

“He knew how the common millet ripened early,
 How the sacrificial millet ripened late;
 How first to sow pulse and then wheat.
 He was intrusted with a minor State
 And taught the people how to sow and reap,
 The common and sacrificial millet,
 Rice and black millet.
 Ere long he taught the whole land,
 Thus completing the work of Yü.”

Few men in history better deserve the grateful remembrance of prosperity than this good minister, who taught the people how to bring forth and increase the things that give life, while so many great men are remembered for sowing widespread death. A signal service of a like nature was rendered to China by the second emperor of the present dynasty, about two centuries and a half ago. He himself records this service thus:—

“I was walking on the first day of the sixth moon in some fields where rice was sown, which was not expected to yield its harvest till the ninth moon. I happened to notice a rice-plant that had already come into ear; it rose above all the rest, and was already ripe. I had it gathered and brought to me; the grain was very fine and full, and I was induced to keep it for an experiment, and see whether it would on the following year retain this precocity, and in fact it did. All the plants that proceeded from it came into ear before the ordinary time, and yielded their harvest in the sixth moon. Every year has multiplied the produce of the preceding, and now for thirty years it has been the rice served on my table. The grain is long, and of a rather reddish color, but of a sweet perfume and very pleasant flavor. It has been named *ya-mi*, or ‘Imperial rice,’ because it was in my gardens that it was first cultivated. It is the only kind that can ripen north of the Great Wall, where the cold begins very early, and ends very late, but in the provinces of the south, where the climate is milder, and the soil more fertile, it is easy to obtain two harvests a year from it, and it is a sweet consolation to me to have procured this advantage for my people.”

A like service in remote times led to the almost deification of Hau Chi, as we have seen; and many temples all over China have for long centuries been raised to eminent men, who served their country well, or were noted for excellent skill in some art or science. Very noteworthy is the instance of Kwang Tî, a famous general who was born in the western province of Tse-Chuan, in the third century of our era. He has

been exalted to the skies, and now temples stand in his honor in every city, whither worshipers carry their offerings. Kwang T'i is accepted as the tutelary genius of the present Manchu dynasty, whose earlier rulers found in him the realization of their own spirit of martial valor. This Genius of War is represented in his temples as a man of majestic and haughty visage; his son, who fought by his side in battle, stands at his left hand, the place of honor; a faithful attendant is on the right. The officers of the army visit the temple on stated days, making the prescribed prostrations before him, and burning incense at his shrine. Legend is busy with his miraculous doings. He appears, it is said, hovering over the imperial army as it goes into battle, and sends forth ghostly arrows against the foe.

When we come to modern times, we can find a hundred instances of a like apotheosis. Thus, the goddess of sailors, worshiped in the southern provinces under the name of Ma Chu, was the daughter of a sailor who lived at Hing Hwa, in the province of Fo Kien, about a thousand years ago. The legend says that one day while she was weaving in her mother's house, she fell asleep, with her head resting on her loom. She dreamed that she saw her father and her two brothers in their junks, in the midst of a storm. She tried to save them, holding her father's junk in her mouth, and taking her brothers' junks in her hands. Unhappily, at that moment her mother called her, and she awoke, opening her lips to answer her mother, and so letting her father's junk fall back into the waves, while her brothers' junks were saved. In reality, it so fell out. For there was indeed a storm on that very day, and her father with his junk was drowned, while her brothers came safe to land.

This dream and its fulfillment brought her such renown that temples are built in her honor, sailors carrying the ashes of her incense as a charm against the waves, and praying to her to abate the fury of the tempests. Like prayers are offered to another woman of the same province, who was born in Fu Chau twelve hundred years ago. She was famed in life for her skill in helping children to make their entrance into the world, and her name is still dear to the hearts of mothers.

The guardian genius of carpenters, cabinet-makers, and all other workers in wood, was himself a carpenter, born in the northeastern province of Shan Tung, in olden days. Fame says that he invented or perfected the saw and chisel, and every year those who use saw and chisel meet in his temple to honor his name, and to invoke his blessing on their skill and handiwork.

We might multiply instances almost endlessly, but the principle is everywhere the same; some noted man or woman, whose genius has conferred benefits on contemporaries, is held in affectionate remembrance, honored on stated days, and invoked as a guardian and patron;

he or she is worshiped with simple rites, and honored with offerings of food or incense. Behind this worship of the mighty dead is a far deeper principle: that universal ancestor-worship which we have seen already flourishing in the days of China's dawn, four or five thousand years ago.

That communing with the living souls of those who have passed away has never ceased nor diminished, through forty or fifty centuries. It was in the beginning, as it is now, the foundation of all Chinese society, of the civil law, and of all moral obligation, whether through the family to society at large, or through ascending degrees to the Emperor, the son of Heaven, and Father of the State. Every family has its ancestral house, a building always solid and dignified, and often stately and beautiful. This temple of the family has its courts and rooms, devoted to various services, and holding many memorials of those who have passed behind the veil. The tablets of rare woods with their names in raised characters, adorned with fine lacquer and gilt, are ranged in cabinets along the walls; their distinctions and dignities are recorded on other tablets. In the presence of these memorials, which only typify the more real presence of the souls of those who have entered the unseen, all their descendants meet at the appointed festivals, whether it be the New Year or the Festival of the First Month, or the Vernal or Autumnal Sacrifice, or some other holy day.

The whole land lives in the sense of communion with the departed fathers and mothers, the ancestors of the race, joined in a single undivided family with the living, and completing their destiny in this and the other world. This is the real pristine faith of China, this commune with those who have passed out of sight, together with reverence for that High Heaven which is above all and before all. This is the faith which was of old; this is the faith which Confucius sought to perfect and complete; and that perfecting is his title to undying fame. Of him alone, among the great names in the history of religion, can it be said that his fame is the very spirit and life of his nation; that descent from him is the sole title of nobility which China recognizes as hereditary. All other distinctions die with their possessors.

It is evident that, in all this, which represents the real and genuine belief of the Chinese through five millenniums, we have not so much mythology as the materials from which mythology comes into being; and these materials, by a singular fortune, are visible in their very operation. We have many pantheons of many nations, but nowhere else have we both the life-history of the elect of the nation, and their worship actually celebrated. Nowhere else can we see the principle of apotheosis in actual operation, the deifying of worthy mortals going on before our eyes.

T A O I S M

THE spiritualism of the Chinese people was greatly accentuated, but by no means brought into being, by a very remarkable man, the contemporary of Confucius — the contemporary also of Buddha and Pythagoras — whom posterity knows as Lao-Tse. A few sentences will suffice to show the spirit of his thought: “There is ever One who presides over the infliction of death. He who would inflict death in the room of Him who so presides, may be described as hewing wood, instead of the carpenter; seldom is it that he who undertakes the hewing instead of the carpenter does not cut his hands! . . . Recompense injury with kindness. . . . To the good I would be good. To the evil I would also be good, in order to make them good. . . . Put yourself back, and you shall be put in front. . . . Follow diligently the Way in your own heart, but make no display of it to the world.”

With Lao-Tse's coming, we begin to find Myths of Creation, of which there is hardly a trace in the older books. Thus the Classic of Purity declares: —

“The Master said: —

“‘The great Logos* has no bodily form,—but It produced and nourishes Heaven and Earth.

“‘The great Logos has no passions,—but It causes the Sun and Moon to revolve.

“‘The great Logos has no name,—but It effects the growth and maintenance of all things.’”

In the inscription on the Stone Tablet in Lao-Tse's temple, the colors of the picture grow richer: —

“After the Primal Ether began its action, the earliest period of time began to be unfolded.

*Chalmers says in his introduction to “The Speculation of The Old Philosopher Lao-Tsze”: “I have thought it better to leave the word Tau untranslated, both because it has given the name to the sect—the Tauists—and because no English word is its exact equivalent. Three terms suggest themselves,—the Way, Reason, and the Word; but they are all liable to objection. Were we guided by etymology, ‘the Way’ would come nearest to the original, and in one or two passages the idea of a Way seems to be in the term; but this is too materialistic to serve the purpose of a translation. ‘Reason,’ again, seems to be more like a quality or attribute of some conscious being than Tau is. I would translate it by ‘the Word,’ in the sense of the Logos, but this would be like settling the question which I wish to leave open, *viz.*—what amount of resemblance there is between the Logos of the New Testament and this Tau, which is its nearest representative in Chinese. In our own version of the New Testament in Chinese we have in the first chapter of John:—‘In the beginning was Tau.’”

“The curtain of the sky was displayed, and the Sun and Moon were suspended in it.

“The four-cornered Earth was established, and the mountains and the streams found their places in it.

“Then the subtle influences of the Ether operated like the heaving of the breath, now subsiding and now expanding.

“The work of production went on in its seasons above and below; all things were formed as from materials, and were matured and maintained.”

We finally get a truly mythological form in the Fable of Pan Ku, still a part of the Lao-Tse tradition:—

“Pan Ku, accompanied by the four miraculous animals, the Phœnix, the Tortoise, the Unicorn, and the Dragon, labored in chaos at the work of Creation, and finally died for his handiwork. His head became mountains; his breath, winds and clouds; his voice, thunder; his limbs became the four directions; his veins, the rivers; his sinews, the undulations of the earth; his flesh became fields; his beard became the stars; his skin and hair became herbs and trees; his teeth, bones, and marrow, became metals, rocks, and precious stones; his sweat became rain, and the creeping things upon his body became men.”

This is quite clearly a more popular form of the same idea. Pan Ku is the Primal Ether, personified as a creative Demiurge. The four miraculous beasts are the symbols of the Four Elements: The Dragon or Salamander representing Fire; the Phœnix or Magical Bird, representing the Air; the Unicorn standing for the Earth; while the Tortoise represents the Water. Thus, to speak of the World resting on the Tortoise, is only a more figurative way of saying that the earth rests in the Waters of Space. Here once more we see the singular value of Chinese mythology, for it shows us step by step how the most elaborate myths arise, as more and more symbolical forms of simple, philosophic truths.

After the death of Pan Ku, the myth continues, there came the Celestial Kings, who reigned for eighteen thousand years. After these came the Terrestrial Kings, who likewise reigned for eighteen thousand years; and, finally, the Human Kings, who reigned for a like period. “The august sovereigns of the highest antiquity, living as in nests on trees in summer, and in caves in winter, silently and spirit-like exercised their wisdom.”

This idea of the affinity of men and spirits is far older than Lao-Tse. We find it in the very ancient traditions of the Li Chi, one of the Five Classics of China. The Li Chi says:—

“In the sphere of the Visible are Music and the Rites; in the Invisible are Spirits.



“When purity and intelligence are in man, his soul and his will are like a spirit.

“The righteous and perfect man is like the spirits.”

A very wonderful conception of Music is elsewhere expressed in the *Li Chi*:—

“Music is the expression of the union of Earth and Heaven. With Music and ceremonies, nothing in the Empire is difficult. Music acts upon the interior of man, and brings it into connection with the spirit. Its principle end is to regulate the passions. It teaches fathers and children, princes and subjects, husbands and wives, their reciprocal duties. The sage finds in Music the rules of his conduct.”

But perhaps the most noteworthy contributions of Lao-Tse to the lore of China was the opening to popular understanding, and, even more, to popular fancy, of those realms of life which we call astral or psychic, and which are every day drawing more and more attention from our own thinkers and observers. The general theory of the astral world has never been better expressed than by a famous Chinaman who lived between six and seven hundred years ago: “There is in the universe an Aura which permeates all things and makes them what they are. Below, it shapes forth land and water; above, the sun and the stars. In man, it is called spirit; and there is nowhere where it is not. In times of national tranquillity, this spirit lies dormant in the harmony which prevails, only at some great crisis it is manifested widely abroad.” It is this Aura and the sense of it which lie at the root of much that is called superstition, and which, in China, is grouped under the general term “fung shui.” This phrase, generally translated “air-water,” should really be rendered “astral-current,” and to the ebb and flow of these astral currents many of the occurrences of life are believed to be due: such are epidemics, panics, waves of national or religious enthusiasm, and tides of fanaticism. A Chinese writer says that a good tide sets in from the north, while an evil tide flows from the south. When the birds of the south wander far north, it is a sign that the southern current is flowing, and hence evil results may be looked for. Here we see the blending of philosophic thought with what we are accustomed to call superstition; and here, as elsewhere, China gives us a clew to much that is mysterious elsewhere.

In China, the doctors of the Tao, as Lao-Tse's followers are called, are especially credited with knowledge of this Aura, in its relation to both worlds. It is natural, therefore, that what we know as spiritualism, the evocation of wraiths of the dead, or the communion with the dead through trance, should be considered the peculiar province of the followers of the Tao. This is well illustrated by a poem of the famous Po Chü-i, of the Tang dynasty, some twelve hundred years ago. A court

beauty had come to a very tragical end. Po Chii-i thus relates the evocation of her spirit:—

“A Taoist priest of Ling-ch'ung, of the Hung-tu school,
Was able, by his perfect art, to summon the spirits of the dead.
Anxious to relieve the fretting mind of his sovereign,
This magician receives orders to urge a diligent quest.
Borne on the clouds, charioted upon ether,
He rushes with the speed of lightning,
High up to heaven, low down to earth, seeking everywhere.
Above, he searches the empyrean; below, the Yellow Springs,
But nowhere in these vast areas can her place be found.
At length he hears of an Isle of the Blest away in mid-ocean,
Lying in realms of vacuity, dimly to be descried.
There gayly decorated buildings rise up like rainbow clouds,
There many gentle and beautiful Immortals pass their days in peace.
Among them is one whose name sounds upon lips as Eternal,
By her snow-white skin and flower-like face he knows that this is she. . . .
Her features are fixed and calm, though myriad tears fall,
Wetting a spray of pear-bloom, as it were with the raindrops of spring.



Subduing her emotions, restraining her grief, she tenders thanks to his Majesty,
Saying how since they parted she has missed his form and voice;
And how, although their love on earth has so soon come to an end,
The days and months among the Blest are still of long duration.
And now she turns and gazes towards the abodes of mortals,
But cannot discern the Imperial city lost in the dust and haze.
Then she takes out the old keepsakes, tokens of undying love,
A gold hairpin, an enamel brooch, and bids the magician carry these back.

One-half of the hairpin she keeps, and one-half of the enamel brooch,
Breaking with her hands the yellow gold, and dividing the enamel in two.
‘Tell him,’ she said, ‘to be firm of heart, as this gold and enamel,
And then in heaven or on earth below we two may meet once more.’”

BUDDHISM

FIVE centuries after the days of Lao-Tse and Confucius, the story of Prince Siddhartha of Kapilavastu, known to his followers as Gautama Buddha, the Shakya Muni, came to China, and from that day to this his shrines have had a place throughout the empire. The legend of the Great Awakening took its place in Chinese Mythology; it is thus recorded by Fa Hsien, the Chinese pilgrim who visited India fifteen centuries ago:—

“The Bodhisattva went on to the Bo tree, and laying down his kusha grass, sat down with his face to the east. Then Mara, the king of the

devils, sent three beautiful women to approach from the north and tempt him; he himself approaching from the south with the same object. The Bodhisattva pressed the ground with his toes, whereupon the infernal army retreated in confusion, and the three women became old. At the above-mentioned place where Buddha suffered mortification for six years, and on all these other spots, men of after ages have built pagodas and set up images, all of which are still in existence: where Buddha, having attained perfect wisdom, contemplated the tree for seven days, experiencing the joys of emancipation; where Buddha walked backward and forward, east and west, under the Bo tree for seven days; where the gods produced a jeweled chamber and worshiped Buddha for seven days; where Buddha sat facing the east on a square stone beneath the nyagrodha tree, and Brahma came to salute him; where the four heavenly kings offered their alms-bowls; where the five hundred traders gave him cooked rice and honey; where he converted the brothers Kasyapa with their disciples to the number of one thousand souls—on all these spots stûpas have been raised.”

One of the popular Chinese romances takes for its hero another even more famous Buddhist pilgrim, Hsüan Tsang, who visited India in the seventh century, and whose authentic memoirs shed a flood of light on the history of India at that period. The Hsüan Tsang of the romance, however, is in no sense historical, nor are his adventures likely to add greatly to our authentic knowledge. One episode, however, may tend to edification. The Hsüan Tsang of the romance, like Saint Anthony of Padua, had a pig as one of his companions. The Chinese pig, however, was symbolical, and represented the lower nature of the Pilgrim. Another of his fellow-travelers was a monkey, a miraculous being which stands for the active will in man. These three came to a certain spot where one of the Immortals directed them to the palace of Buddha, and, following the way thus pointed out, they presently found themselves arrested by a wide and tempestuous torrent. When the Pilgrim was halting in confusion, the monkey discovered a narrow bridge, no more than a single plank swaying over the river, and beside the bridge was a notice, bearing the words, “The Heavenly Ford.” The Pilgrim was afraid to trust himself to the frail and slippery plank, even when the monkey, setting an example of courage, ran along the shaking bridge, and landed safely on the other side. The Pilgrim and the pig still refused to attempt the crossing, even when the monkey, returning to their side of the torrent, tried to lead them across in safety. The pig refused absolutely, saying, “I can never cross the stream; I shall never become a Buddha!”

While they were lamenting, a boat suddenly appeared, and the boatman cried out, “The ferry! The ferry!” And Hsüan Tsang thought with delight that his trials were at an end. To his terror, however, he

saw that the miraculous bark was bottomless, and his dismay was greater than before. While the Pilgrim still stood shivering on the brink, the monkey, greatly daring, pushed him forward to the bridge, and the hapless Pilgrim, losing his balance, fell headlong into the foaming torrent. The ferryman seized him, and dragged him into the boat; and the monkey and the pig were also presently safe on board. Just as they pushed off toward the center of the stream, they saw a dead body floating away down with the current. The Pilgrim was terrified, but the monkey laughed and said, "Fear not, Master! That dead body is your old self!" Thus did they cross the miraculous river, and the Pilgrim, safe landed on the other bank, recognized himself as an immortal. Losing himself, he had found himself.

In the Middle Ages, Buddhism and the Tao tradition were often blended into one. Thus it comes that there is much Buddhist coloring in those visions of the Underworld, recorded by disciples of Lao-Tse, which remind us of Dante's "Inferno" and "Purgatorio," and the older vision lore which flourished in Italy even before Dante. A single passage from a comparatively modern work, the "Ten Courts of Purgatory," will illustrate this class of mythological tradition; it is the description of the sixteen wards of the Sixth Court:—

"In the first ward, the souls are made to kneel for long periods on iron shot. In the second, they are placed up to their necks in filth. In the third, they are pounded till the blood runs out. In the fourth, their mouths are opened with iron pincers and filled full of needles. In the fifth, they are bitten by rats. In the sixth, they are inclosed in a net of thorns, and nipped by locusts. In the seventh, they are crushed to a jelly. In the eighth, their skin is lacerated and they are beaten on the raw. In the ninth, their mouths are filled with fire. In the tenth, they are licked by flames. In the eleventh, they are subjected to noisome smells. In the twelfth, they are butted by oxen and trampled on by horses. In the thirteenth, their hearts are scratched. In the fourteenth, their heads are rubbed till their skulls come off. In the fifteenth, they are chopped in two at the waist. In the sixteenth, their skin is taken off and rolled up into spills."

The crimes for which these punishments are inflicted, are duly enumerated, and we are told that those who have passed through these trials and purgations are led on through the following courts, up to the tenth and last. Here they are forced to drink the cup of forgetfulness, before entering the world again, in a new birth,—exactly as in Virgil's vision of the Underworld, in the "Æneid." After crossing the last bridge of the Underworld, "all rush on to birth like an infatuated or drunken crowd, and again, in their new childhood, hanker after forbidden flavors. Then, regardless of consequences, they begin to destroy life, and thus forfeit all claims to the mercy and compassion of God. They take no thought

as to the end that must overtake them; and, finally, they bring themselves once more to the same horrible plight.”

Thus three streams mingle in the Mythology of China; first its clear river of pristine tradition, with its worship of High Heaven, its reverence for the spirits of Heaven and Earth, its homage to the spirit of man; then the mystical stream of vision and trance, with Lao Tse as its source; and, last, the strong current of traditional lore which flows from Gautama Buddha, and which, in entering the Middle Kingdom, like the Yang Tse River passing through its painted gorges, catches many strange colors, many marvelous and lurid hues, which its clear upper course in India never knew.

Yet the real faith of the empire, even to-day, is the pristine worship of High Heaven; the temple of Heaven at the capital is the noblest shrine within its dominions. Thrice a year, the Emperor, as Father of the land and Son of Heaven, enters the blue-tiled shrine to offer the devotion of the race. Solemn vigils prepare him, and at dawn he passes into the holy place, ascends the marble steps to the altar, and, bowing low, praises the Divine Power, and asks for the blessing of Heaven upon the whole land.

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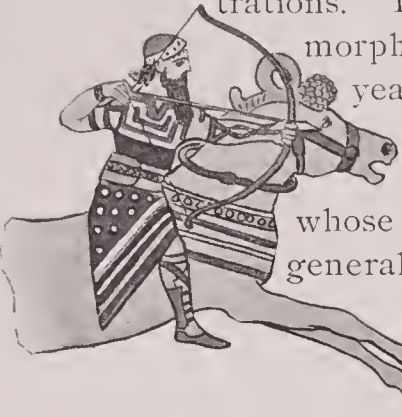
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(*Note*—All of the above works have been consulted in preparing this chapter.)

ASSYRO-CHALDEAN MYTHOLOGY

By C. H. A. BYERREGAARD

ALTHOUGH the "science of religion" is a new study and "Assyriology" a new field of research, the two are nevertheless so far advanced and so wide in results that we are able by their help to prove the development of religion and to elucidate each stage of it with many illustrations. This richness of results has made it possible to construct the morphology of Assyro-Chaldean religion and mythology. A few years ago it could not have been done.



The first element necessary for the understanding of the subject of this essay is the ethnological. Who are the people whose religion we define? Where did they live? What was their general character, etc.?

The geographical locality of the peoples we speak of is the Mesopotamian Valley, or the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, and the adjacent mountain regions, especially to the north. The ethnological, political, and religious development to be described began in the southernmost part of this valley, and its beginnings covered at least two thousand years. It moved in the course of time toward the north, where it was stationary for about two thousand years. The later movement took about four thousand years,—in other words, the whole development lasted about eight or nine thousand years. The people we are dealing with are:—

(1) The original inhabitants. We do not know what they called themselves, but the moderns called them Turanians, Accadians, or Shumiro-Accadians. That they came from somewhere else is evident; but we do not know for a certainty from whence, because we have no monumental evidence. We associate them, however, with the primitive peoples of High Asia to the east, and consider the yellow race their present-day representatives. They are the most interesting of the peoples of which we speak below; they make the beginning of the whole religious movement in the Mesopotamian Valley, and they give character to all that follows. In this essay they are often called simply Chaldeans.

(2) The Chaldeans or Babylonians (the two names are here used synonymously). They lived to the south in the alluvial districts and marshes

of the valley. They were a mixed race, partly of Kaldâ (a tribe in the marshes), partly of Accadian extraction, and these merged in immigrated Semitic stock. Ethnologically, they thus resembled the English of to-day, and besides that resemblance they were like them in being stout, thickset, and inclined to agriculture and industry. They loved the good things of this earth, and education and literature. These desires made them tradesmen.

(3) The Assyrians. These people were tall and muscular; they had full lips, dark and piercing eyes, a slightly hooked nose, and they grew their hair and beard long. They lived to the north in the limestone hills and thick forests. They were warlike, but did not enjoy bloodshed, and, as they had a natural bent for trade and administration, their wars always had a commercial object. For "books" and learning they had little care. Their "libraries" were managed by scribes, and their fields cultivated by slaves. Like the Babylonians, they were intensely religious, but their religion was far different from that of the Babylonians, as will be seen below.



The Shumiro-Accadians, "the people of nature," — or the Chaldeans as they are oftenest called below,—became merged in the Babylonians because the civilization of the latter was one of Mind. The Babylonians themselves were subjected by the Assyrians because the will of the latter was the stronger, and because Babylonian intellectual culture had lost itself in forms. The Assyrian himself vanished because brute force or worldliness is its own doom, and he had become lost in it. While thus these nations, as bearers of the civilizations of their time, pass out of history according to the laws of life, the natural stock remains. Sometimes it seems to have disappeared; sometimes it seems to reappear in new historic combinations. The three races here spoken of had practically lost their distinctive characters when we hear of them in connection with the Old Testament later narratives. After the time of Assur-banipal (Sardanapal), Assyria declined, and B. C. 625 it was subdued by Medes and Babylonians. Babylonia itself dropped out of history B. C. 538, when conquered by Medians under Cyrus and Darius; and no reference is made to it in this paper after that date.

Close attention to this introduction is necessary in order to see the reason for the development of Accadian religion from star-worship to mythology and to ethnic religion; and these are represented by the succession of the three races. The whole subject of Assyro-Chaldean mythology must be studied in this way in order to get system and reason out of the confused reports.

The oldest inhabitants of the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, the Shumiro-Accadians, or Chaldeans for short, had no mythology. Mythol-

ogy is a late product and follows in order of time upon simple nature worship; but nature-worship is nearer to true religion than to mythology. The Chaldeans were what we call nature-worshippers. They did not formulate their perceptions of nature into philosophical notions or art representations; they lived without a medium excepting nature, which was their oracle. But,

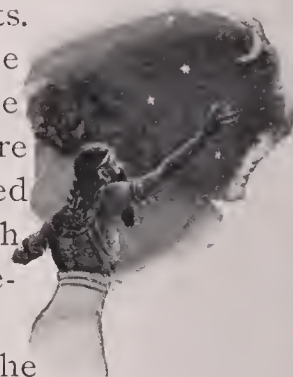
“ Think (not) in nature’s state they *blindly* trod;
The state of nature was the reign of God.”

These primitive people had no other company than nature and no other measure than their own experience. Hence they themselves became the measure of all things, and everything appeared to have as much of personal quality as they themselves. Science has called this way of considering nature *polydæmonism* and *animism*, but, nevertheless, has not been able to fully grasp the real essence of nature-worship. By limiting itself to a thought-conception, science has necessarily excluded the living human element in nature-worship. As the following exposition must follow the way and method of science, the reader must always bear in mind that only too often the life-element is excluded from the exposition, and must be supplied by himself. A religion is not a study, but a life.

To make use then of modern terms, let us say that the Accadian nature-religion occupied “the mythopeic level” and that it can best be defined as “magical polydæmonism under the dominion of animism.”* In simpler language, this would mean that it was a religious philosophy made by the dawning human intelligence, and was so completely overpowered by the objective world that it was rather unconscious of itself and its own intellectual movements. If we attempt to reduce this definition further, we must say that these primitive people simply believed their own impressions and took their perceptions for real objects. Such a reduction of the definition would satisfy science, but would not meet the facts as we have them before us in monuments. The facts are so undeniable that a dispute is out of the question. These people evidently had a vigorous sense of a reality and were not dealing in illusions or mere subjective notions. If the reader, therefore, as advised above, will fill the following scientific definitions with life, he may perhaps get at the truth of this nature-religion.

It is reported, and the monuments prove it, that the Chaldeans were star-worshippers. What does this mean, and what is the real element in it? Let us see.

*C. P. Tiele: Elements of the Science of Religion. I. Morphological. Gifford Lectures before the University of Edinburgh, 1869.



A savage standing alone in nature, with himself alone as a center on which to rely, must inevitably come to the realization of a conscious universe, whether he formulates his realization in words or not. He feels, with the modern poet, that,

"Nothing in this world is single;
All things . . .
In each other's being mingle."

In other words, stars, trees, mountains, etc., become living existences, and are personalities as much as he himself. They influence him as much as he influences them. From this simple but most natural philosophy spring all the doctrines of totemism, polydæmonism, animism, world-soul, conscious universe, etc.

One poet, Addison, hears the stars "forever singing as they shine"; another, Milton, sees in them "the way to God's eternal throne"; the Apocalypse perceives an astral tree "bearing twelve manners of fruit, yielding its fruits every month"; the Psalmist exclaims, did not He appoint the moon for seasons; and do not Christians believe that their Savior's star was seen? Aristotle wrote to Alexander the Great that "Heaven is full of the gods to whom we give the name of stars," and Shakespeare makes Kent say in "King Lear,"

"It is the stars,
The stars above us that govern our conditions."

There is an evident harmony in all of these testimonials. The stars influence the savage as much as the poet, the philosopher, and the priest. They all are worshipers of the stars. Whatever mistakes have been made and whatever foolish doctrines have been invented, we have nothing to do with them here. Fundamentally the primitive Accadian was right, however childish his Sabaism might have become; and incantations from the Babylonian age prove many aberrations.

Let us take for granted that the Chaldean was a star-worshiper. He may have been a polydæmonist, or one who realized a demon in every object, but he was more than that. Sabaism recognized "the unity of God," it saw a unity in the All. This tendency to realize a unity has been called Ouranism, or the worship of heaven, that is, the Infinite. This, too, was neither an abstraction nor a mere thought to the ancient Accadian; it was an *experience*. How we may have an experience of the Infinite may be intellectually explained by the words of Max Müller. He reasons:—

"Beyond every limit, we must always take it for granted that there is something else. But what is the reason of that? The reason why we cannot *conceive* an absolute limit is because we never *perceive* an absolute limit; or, in other words, because in perceiving the finite, we also perceive the Infinite also."

There is, then, always a *beyond* to all perceptions, and the conception of that is the Infinite. To the ancients and moderns alike the symbol for that conception or the means of that perception is space or the heavens. Every one who has experienced the depths of the heavens by vision, and by that vision has been carried off and away from the finite, is an Ouranist and akin in belief to the old Chaldean. In China to-day Ouranism is alive in the worship of *Tien*, "the azure," "the sky," "the order of nature."

The Earth-spirit was also an object of worship in ancient Chaldea. The Earth-spirit, or the Spirit of the Deep, was of double character. In one respect it was conceived of like the mysterious "Mothers" to whom Faust is bidden to go for Helena and Paris, beyond actuality and to a place to where there is no way.

"In solitude, where reigns nor space nor time,
Are goddesses enthroned from early prime."

The Spirit of the Deep is the guardian of Truth, and from it proceeds everything that has life. Direct communion with Truth is only attained by intense mental effort and patient study; by abnegation, not by devotion.

The Earth-spirit, or the Spirit of the Deep, is the multiform spirit of generation, and as such it was later revered in the symbolical forms of trees, towers, and mountains, or in things that rise from below. It was also, and that especially in the earliest days, brought before the imagination as a deep cleft, an abyss; and caves, water-springs, etc., were used as representations of it.

In another aspect, the Spirit of the Deep was Mumum-Tiamat, or Chaos, Darkness, and Lawlessness. As Chaos this spirit is *Bohu*, the *Bohu* of the Old Testament, "the Void out of which God created heaven and earth"; as Darkness it was like the Phœnician Wind or Spirit; and as Lawlessness it was "the monsters of the ground," evil spirits and demons with which we later shall hear Marduc fight.



Tiamat is the Elementary Spirit, and all elementary spirits are parts of her. The moderns have accustomed themselves to abstract and mechanical conceptions in their study of nature, hence they cannot readily realize what this means. They may, however, gain some insight into nature's mysteries by thinking of natural forces as personalities,—not necessarily as human personalities, but as conscious and volitional powers, not acting from what we call ethical principles, but moved by an inner dynamic impulse.

Very prominent were the elementary powers called Maskim, or the seven spirits of the immensity of space; but they did not enjoy a good

name, either in heaven or on earth. Their birthplace was called the Abyss, but they were not submissive to its rules nor to its lord, Mulge. They are thus described: —

“They are seven; seven they are! Seven they are in the depths of Ocean: seven they are and they are the disturbers of the face of Heaven! They arise from the Abyss, from hidden lurking places. They spread like snares. Male they are not; female they are not. Wives they have not and children are not born to them! Order they know not, nor beneficence; prayers and supplication they hear not. Vermin they are, grown in the bowels of the mountains — foes of Êa. They are the throne-bearers of the gods; they sit in the roads and make them unsafe. The fiends! the fiends! They are seven; seven they are!”

The evident contradictory character of these spirits is explained by the fact that they are not ethical existences, but nature-forces, who do not act according to our notions of ethics, but are both good and bad at the same time; they issue from one another and may unite with any other power; they may be destructive in one moment and propitious in another, etc. Êa, already spoken of, will be explained below. The Maskim are called the cause of earthquakes, floods, tempests, and similar devastations. Such forces are called evil by man, because they disturb his peace, and the order and rule of things. They are, however, types of that nature which is “but Art unknown to Thee.”

In league with the Maskim are numerous legions of evil spirits, which break into men's society everywhere and bring disturbance. They steal the child from the father's knee; they fall as rain; they blow as wind; they strike as lightning; they burn as fire; they are malaria, insanity, ill-luck, discord, etc. In connection with the Chaldean realization of evil spirits, arose what is now only a symbolical custom of setting apart the “Devil's corner”; that is, a corner of a cultivated field as an offering to evil spirits, that they should not destroy the whole crop of the field. The extensive realization among Chaldeans of evil spirits proves their nearness to nature, their feeling themselves as elements among elements, forces among forces, and that they were not rulers but parts of nature.

The Chaldean philosophy was one of the mutability of things, the right of the stronger; and out of this recognition of rights grew his moral system, which was substantially a code of warfare. His ethics turned upon the subjection of the spirits or the turning of them in his favor. The Chaldean never became the master of the spirits, and the development of his creed by the later Babylonian tended only to a further elaboration of his beginnings and to greater system. Neither the individual Chaldean nor the hired priest or “sorcerer” became master. Of the priestcraft that grew out of this ethics more will be found below.

The abode of the dead was, strangely enough, closely associated with the experiences of evil spirits. The two subjects seem to have been only two chapters of Chaldean spiritualism. The abode of the dead was called *Arali*, and was by Babylonians elaborated to be the most dismal place to which the dead could go. *Arali* means "the great land," or "the great city," and was ruled by "the lady of the Abyss," a female deity. Of course all these personifications belong to the Babylonian age; they are not of Chaldean origin. *Arali*, to the Chaldeans, was mainly "a chaos," the abyss into which the soul falls when it leaves its earthly body. To primitive man, such an abyss is the womb of Nature into which he returns, whence he originally came, and whence he by birth may come forth again like the plant, which renews itself in the seed. In his weaker moments the natural man fears it, because its majesty overwhelms him. In his saner moments he enters it with strong hopes of rebirth. Most of the Chaldean traditions that so far have come down to us express his fear and dread of this "no man's land."

The Chaldean's fear of *Arali* and the evil spirits caused him to give way to professional sorcerers, or men and women who had mind and will enough to control these elemental forces. A sorcerer is originally a man or woman wiser in the occult than others. Being of strong minds, they readily became a power in the state; but besides this unfortunate use of their power, they were in Chaldea the representatives of arts and learning. It is an unworthy belief held by many moderns that sorcerers were frauds and that their influence was an illusion. A close study of the numerous "incantations" that have been translated proves: (1) that the sorcerers or magicians knew all or most of the laws of nature of which we boast, and that they acted according to them; and (2) that where the laws were not known—and remain unknown to this day—they set (their) mind against (an objective) Mind, in the belief that a law of Mind ruled the so-called Unknown. They carried this belief so far that, for instance, in cases where they could not cure a sickness, they brought the sick person out into the high-road, that any person passing by might use his mind upon the patient and try to effect a cure. The report of such an act relieves them of unfair judgment and proves how strong was their belief in Mind. Of course, the reader will remember that we are here talking about the pure Chaldean primitive ages, and are not defending the charlatans of Greco-Roman times.

By Mind must be understood *Êa* and *Ana*, "the spirit of earth" and "the spirit of heaven" welded into one power, philosophically best called "the soul of the world." In the next age it is called *Meridug*, *Marduk*, or *Saviour*, who is the second god in the Babylonian first triad of gods. *Êa* is "the lord of the deep," the preëminently wise and

beneficent spirit or Divine Intelligence; the founder and upholder of order and harmony in existence.

The following is an example of the purity and simplicity of a Chaldean religio-magical "spell":—

"On the butter which is brought from a pure stall,
The milk which is brought from a pure sheepcote,
The pure butter of the pure stall, lay a spell,
May the man, the son of his god, recover;
May the man be bright and pure as the butter,
May he be white as this milk."

A "spell" like this depends for its power upon "the suggestion" of the one who throws it, and "the suggestion" is again a result of insight and power of will. So long as Chaldean simplicity of mind and purpose lasted, so long lasted the period of "spells." When it was succeeded by reflection and intellectual notions, the power of the "spell" vanished; and that was in the Assyrian and succeeding times.

The Accadian cosmology, the oldest known, especially under the form of the Chaldean zodiacal system, is the frame in which is set the pictures of nature and gods thus far presented.

The Turanian races to this day use the duodecimal system of counting; twelve and sixty are perfect numbers to them, as they were to the Babylonians; and as they are, too, to the greatest trader of to-day, the Englishman, the commercial division in money, weights, and measures. The reason may be sought for in animism and the fourfoldness of nature.

The Chaldean zodiac, or the sun's annual course through it, was divided into 360 equal degrees; the daily course of the sun was through twelve *kasbus*, or double hours. The lunar mansions lay for the most part along the celestial equator or in the zodiac. There were sometimes twenty-eight, sometimes twenty-seven days in the lunar month, and the lunar month probably long antedated the solar zodiac. Chinese books claim many of their titles to be as old as 2500, B.C. Other divisions of the sky were the decans of which Miss Clerke writes, "The Chaldeans chose three stars in each sign to be the 'council or gods' of the planets. These were called by the Greeks 'decans,' because ten degrees of the elliptic and ten days of the year were presided over by each. The college of the decans was conceived as moving, by their annual risings and settings, in an eternal circuit between the infernal and supernal regions. Stars were gods or living existences, and the Chaldean studied how to regulate his conduct in harmony with the notions of these celestial beings. In the ancient inscriptions all stars are marked with a star-cross, meaning god. In the ancient language this cross was called *dingit*, in the later Assyrian it was *ilu* or *el*. In Hebrew it became El-o-him, and

there it has a distinct nature signification and is the oldest name for the deity.”

The first place was given to the moon, and not to the sun until Assyrian times. All nomads look upon the moon as a benefactress and make her the ruler of their calendrical system, but agriculturalists and intellectual people give the preference to the sun. The ever-changing appearance of the moon is a true type of nature's life. The sun, the Babylonians characteristically said, does not properly belong to the heavens since it daily passes beyond the limits of the latter. The moon, as the god *Sin*, occupies an insignificant place in Assyria, yet the following hymn addressed to the moon-god is very beautiful. In this hymn the moon is masculine: —

“In heaven who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme!
 On earth who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme!
 As for thee, thy word is proclaimed in heaven, and the angels bow down
 their faces.
 As for thee, thy word is proclaimed on earth, and the spirits of the
 earth kiss the ground.
 As for thee, thy word is spread on high like the wind, and stall and
 fold are quicksands.
 As for thee, thy word on earth is established, and verdure is created.
 As for thee, thy word in stall and sheepcote becomes visible, and living
 creatures are increased.
 As for thee, thy word has brought forth law and justice, so that man-
 kind has established law.
 As for thee, thy word is as the far distant heavens, and the deep buried
 earth; none can know it.
 As for thee and thy word, who shall know it? Who shall repeat it?
 Oh, Lord, in heaven is thy lordship; on earth is thy dominion;
 Among the gods, thy brethren, a rival thou hast not.”

We have thus far told about Accadian religion as if it were clearly defined, yet much of that which has been said belongs to the following period, which is usually called the Babylonian, on account of Babylonian political supremacy. However, we have so often called the past the Chaldean, that the reader will have no difficulty in distinguishing periods. We may now say that the Babylonian period began about 2500, B.C. with the political supremacy, but it would also be correct to say that it began about 4000, B.C., because all that we have told about Chaldean religion appeared as early as that time and can be said to have attained full development at about 2500, B.C. The difference between the two periods is this: that sacerdotal or intellectual forms supplant the animistic; that it is mythological, rather than natural; that mentality assumes control over the natural; that theological triads come to the front and

the nature-powers are reduced to "minor deities." Men were taught not so much to look to "the starry heavens above" as to "the moral nature within." With this change came confusion in religion, but civilization in the state. As for the people, it was true then, as it is now, that "where there is no vision, the people perish." (Prov. xix., 18.) Such a change is the work of the Unconscious, or that which Schopenhauer calls Will. It is the transformation which, like natural growth, is so gradual that it is only seen when accomplished. As it takes several generations of men to effect it, it is difficult for the participants to discover what is going on; unless men are philosophers, they are unconscious of the movement that carries them on — much like fishes in the water. Furthermore, men are only conscious moment by moment of their own wishes and desires. If then these moments are filled by the Unconscious, it becomes an impossibility for them to discover their own growth and myth-making. This law explains most of the above as being of mythopeic character, to use a modern scientific term.

The first glance at the gods of the second period shows clearly that the Babylonian pantheon is made up of local gods, or the old totems personalized. These gods stand related to each other usually as do the cities or kings. The most important are El, or Bel, of Babylon city, and Asshur in Assyria.

As was to be expected, the oldest of these gods, those of Accadia, are seen only dimly and shadowlike; they have no distinct attributes, and, as is common with all the greatest gods in mythology, they are not spoken of so often as the minor ones. The Babylonians never represented the form of Bel nor built temples to Bel; they even often omitted his name from the lists of principal gods, and that is a sign of reverence and shows great antiquity. Babylon gets its name from this god, namely, Babel or "the gate of El." The name is evidently esoteric, and, judging from the city's later history, its explanation must be sought for along sexual lines. The valley formation and the fruitfulness of the region also stand in relation to the name. When the city was founded, the religion of the rulers and the people was a worship of Nature's generative powers, hence the city's name and history; hence also the abomination it represented in the eye of the "Lord's chosen people" and the later Christian Church.

As immediate successors to El in Babylon and Asshur in Assyria comes a triad of gods: Anu-Bel-Êa. Such a succession shows loss of naturalism and advance in civilization, with its attendants of priests, temples, and soldiers. These three, Anu — Bel — Êa, are called "the great gods," and in all probability we have in this triad a cosmogonic myth. Anu is the primordial chaos, primitive matter; Êa is spirit or

intelligence moving upon and animating matter; Bel is the actual cosmic existence. In another aspect Anu is the god of earth, Bel of heaven, and Êa of the waters; but the lines are not drawn distinctly, and Anu and Bel take the lead of Êa.

Anu, "the old Anu," "the king of the lower world," "the lord of spirits and demons" is, as his name clearly indicates, the oldest and the original god, a conception which also comes out in the appellation "the father of the gods." Anu was formerly Ana, "heaven," or the "lord of the starry heavens." Ana was the local god of Erech, and is invoked in the oldest magical texts as the Divine Sky. For ages people strove to bury their dead in or near by Erech, "the house of heaven." Anu's emblem is the single upright wedge (\wedge). This single wedge has the numerical power of sixty on the Chaldean numeration tablets,—another evidence of antiquity.



Bel is familiar to us from Scripture, and is a striking figure in the Assyro-Babylonian pantheon. In both places he is evidently a double character. Esoterically he is a symbol of El and is usually called "Lord." Exoterically he is painted as the maker of heaven and earth in the "history of creation"; and in the "wars of the gods" he fights Tiamat and her brood. But this exoteric story contains also esotericism. It is, however, too great a subject to enter upon here.

Êa, the third person of the triad, is Spirit, not conceived of as Wind, but as Water. He is "lord of fountains," and in this character a parallel to Anu and Bel. Esoterically he was called "lord of deep thoughts." As a very late transformation we hear of him as Oannes, the father of Babylonian commercial civilization. Berosus, the priest-historian (about 300, B.C.) of Babylon, tells the fish legend of Oannes, but we must omit it here, referring the readers to our bibliography.

The triad of Anu-Bel-Êa seems to be a philosophical conception expressed in terms of mind; and while it represented the official religion, there was another triad of far more popular import and of wider recognition. And this triad is that of Moon-Sun-Air, officially called Sin-Shamas-Yav. All three gods are evidently remains of the early animistic belief. The last is called by us of to-day by many names, because the real name was never spelled phonetically; on the monuments the god is always represented by a monogram, *Im*, clearly indicating a sacred character. Other names are Vul, Bin, Yem, and Rimmon. The last is familiar from the Bible, and is thought to have come from the far north of Assyria and to be identical with Mer and Adad. It occurs in the name of the earliest Assyrian ruler we know, about 1850, B.C. Very

long time must have passed before the name became so familiar as to become totemistic and a part of a king's name. This shows that in this god we meet a formation of highest antiquity, one probably coming down from the Accadian primitive ages. It lies near to identify this god with "the prince of the power of air," in both good and bad senses, speaking in modern terms. To one who has understood what the Romans meant by "Jupiter Tonans," and who has followed Ruskin on a visit to the "Queen of the Air," the mystery of Im will begin to reveal itself.

The second person in the last triad is Shamas, and he is a sun-god, as we always find these "seconds" in the triads to be. He is also, as they are, "regent of all things," "judge of heaven and earth," etc. Under naturalistic forms he is "the lord of fire," and thus a creator and destroyer as well. A mysterious veil, however, is spread over this god, and we hear less of him than of other sun-gods.

The moon-god, Sin, took precedence over the sun-god, both in the wide extent of worship and in the reverence shown by Babylonians and Assyrians alike. It is most interesting to notice Sin as called "the supporting architect," "the strengthener of fortifications," "the lord of building." It shows that the Assyrians attributed the basic art, architecture, to the moon, rather than to the sun, which is the custom elsewhere. In that again we must see an animistic trait. The moon being masculine, it represents the building power, the plastic force, in relation to darkness, water, etc.

The Assyrian, as well as its original, the Accadian religious philosophy, never thought of or represented life and love separated. They are always simply two aspects of one power. Hence all gods are goddesses also, and *vice versa*. This is the case with all gods, excepting those that precede the speculative ages. Êa, for instance, is not a mind-product but a perception, hence not of sexual character in the sense of the later gods. The later gods are *nature concentrated*; the former are *nature so diffused* that human conceptions vanish in the mist of vastness. The idea of duality in divinity is most strangely represented, for instance, in Beltis or Mylitta, the *alter ego* of Bel. We know what she meant from the elaboration her idea received as the Cybele of the Phrygians, the Rhea of the Greeks, and the Magna Mater or Bona Dea of the Romans. Most modern Assyriologists represent these deities as colorless reflexes of their male counterparts. This unfortunate misconception arises from a total lack of Theosophic insight.

It was stated above that there were no fast and fixed boundaries between the Accadian and Babylonian stages of religious development. Neither is there any firm and fast line between Babylonian and Assyrian

religion. The Assyrians took over everything Babylonian and added it to their own. As has been said, they were hardy and vigorous. This trait shows itself in all their thoughts and deeds. They worshiped, one may say, power in human form, hence their gods are intensely human, and the kings, not the priests, are the intermediaries between the gods and the country. Babylon was great, but no Oriental city could compare to Nineveh, "the city of *Nin*," as a center of religion and civilization. About two thousand years before Babylonia, Assyria was a marvel of centralization and pride. The royal palace, not the temple, was the shrine.

We find everything Accadian, everything Chaldean and Babylonian, again in Assyria. Assyria borrowed everything and changed much of it to suit its ambition. Its distinct contribution to religion seems to be the substitution of a humanized god, Asshur, for the animistic and theological gods of the past. Asshur is supreme in every sense. He is figured as a man with a horned cap, carrying a bow or shooting an arrow. His emblems are those of the king; in fact, the two are often so similar that they are hard to distinguish. The whole state of religious affairs seems to point to something similar to the deification of the Roman emperors. Assyria, too, ends as abruptly as did Rome, when the balance of earthly and celestial things was lost.

Another contribution to religion in Assyria is the ethical element that appears in its hero-tales, the most famous of which are those of Ishtar and Ishtubar. It is sufficient to quote a part of the Ishtar legend to prove the ethical character of the last, or Assyrian, stage of the Accadian-Chaldean religious philosophy. In its day it may have been only esoteric wisdom. To-day, however, we see clearly the meaning of its symbolism.

Ishtar followed her husband, Dumuzi, into the Lower World to claim him from their common foe, the Queen of the Dead. The opening verses run thus:—

"Towards the land whence there is no return; towards the house of corruption, Ishtar, the daughter of Sin, has turned her mind; towards the dwelling that has an entrance but no exit; towards the road that may be traveled but not retraced," etc.

She addresses the gate-keeper:—

"Keeper, open thy gate that I may pass. If thou openest not and I may not enter, I will smite the gate, and break the lock; I will demolish the threshold and enter by force; then will I let loose the dead to return to the earth, that they may live and eat again."

The keeper requested permission to go to see Allat, the queen, about these matters and to report that Ishtar is come for the Water

of Life, kept concealed in Allat's domain.* In the meantime Ishtar sings that she has come in sorrow, not in enmity:—

“I wish to weep over the heroes who have left their wives. I wish to weep over the wives who have been taken from their husband's arms. I wish to weep over the Only Son,† who was taken away before his time.”

Allat allows Ishtar to pass, but commands the keeper to strip her of a garment as she passes through each gate. Patiently she allows it to be done, and pathetic is her outburst when he removes her last garment. At length she stands before Allat, who taunts her. Ishtar does not control her anger but curses Allat, who in revenge commands her chief minister to slay Ishtar with the plague—sixty dire diseases.

But Ishtar's absence from the earth brings disturbance to gods and men; with her is gone life and love, and all nature stands still. The gods become alarmed and dispatch messengers to Êa for help and influence. Êa sends a phantom, Uddusunanir,‡ created for the purpose, to Allat, who curses but obeys. Ishtar retraces her steps through the gates, and at each gate recovers the garment that was taken from her.

The apparent lesson is evident enough. Life and love cannot be spared from the worlds of gods and men. Applied cosmologically, the legend seems to be of a solar nature. Explained psychologically, it means that mastery is only attained by a complete uncovering of the natural and subjection to tests of obedience. Ethically, the story emphasizes the necessity of a perfect death in order to attain such a self-recovery as the mystics call “salvation.”

The importance of the legend becomes more apparent when we learn that Ishtar is more than simply a warrior-queen and queen of love; that she is one of “the twelve great gods,” and an Assyrian compound goddess of numerous male and female gods and goddesses. The most interesting element in her is this, that this savior-goddess is female, a sort of mother-goddess. Later Assyria worshiped her with orgies and a sensuality unsurpassed in the annals of religion. She seems to have been both a *Venus Urania* and a *Venus Vulgiva*. Her descent to Allat's domain contains elements even superior to those of the Mater Gloriosa, “the Eternal Womanly.” In her conception and worship lie all the elements of Accadian-Assyrian religious notions as they had developed in the course of more than nine thousand years. As poetry,

*The infernal regions explained above.

†A name given to Dumuzi, in an esoteric sense, it seems.

‡The word means “renewal of light,” or “renewal of life,” from “to sprinkle” and “the grotto,” the two compound words of that name; evidently a symbol.

the legend is elevated and spiritual in thought, vivid in coloring and tender in feeling.

As a sort of parallel to the Ishtar legend, one may study that of Ischdubar or Gilmamesh. Robbed of its extravagant colorings, the legend shows us a solar hero as the Assyrians thought of him. The story is too long and too intricate to be related and explained here. The reader can easily get access to it, and as easily explain it himself. The myth of Dumuzi, the husband of Ishtar, is also a solar myth, and, like that of Ischdubar, is the logical evolution of an idea. The two myths, read in the light of esoteric insight, become types of the evolution of a hero—a god, etc. There is this peculiarity with the Ishtar, Ischdubar, and Dumuzi legends, that they have come to us, as if by miracle, from an utterly unknown antiquity, so complete that we can re-present them, and so lifelike that we, as if by magic, may meet their heroes personally. These legends also unlock the Phœnician stories of Tammuz, Adonis, and Astarte. They also contain all that Greece knew of the mystical Aphrodite. Read backward, they reveal nature; read forward and into history, they lay bare the secret keys to civilization.

An examination of any or all of the great religious systems of the past shows that they follow the laws of thought. Not only do single gods become absorbed in greater gods, and these arrange themselves into triads, as we have seen, but triads fade away in gods that are a synthesis or a fusion of nature, humanity, and divinity. Marduk is such a god-absorbing idea. Marduk is the incorporation of "the longings of the nations" and the centralization of all Babylonian-Assyrian aspirations and insights. In the New Testament we find the Christ called by Paul, "the principle in whom all things stand together." The same can be said of Marduk; the Christ is both *the* star, *the* stone, *the* lamb, *the* man, *the* angel, *the* god, etc.; and so is Marduk the principle into whom all these powers coalesce. Such is the *ideal* Marduk; but practically the Marduk of the people is not so grand, being merely *Baal* or *Bel*, that is "Lord."

Marduk, or as the Hebrew has it, Merodach, was "the active side of his father Êa. To use the language of Gnosticism, he was the practical activity that emanates from wisdom."* Marduk was the Accadian original Asari-uru-duga, "the chief who does good to man." He was the god of life who raised the dead and healed the sick. He was Mar-utuki, "the lord of demons," and, curiously enough, that word can also be translated "son of demons." According to another legend, Marduk was the champion of the bright powers of the day and was called "the light of the spirits of heaven." He was also Sun-god, or "the illuminator of dark-

* A. H. Sayre, Hibbert Lectures.

ness." These designations of Marduk and numerous others may be summed up in the following hymns:—

"Thou art the King of the land, the lord of the world!
 O firstborn of Êa, omnipotent over heaven and earth.
 O mighty lord of mankind, king of all lands,
 Thou art the god of gods,
 The prince of heaven and earth who had no rival,
 The companion of Anu and Bel,
 The merciful one among the gods,
 The merciful one who loves to raise the dead to life,
 Marduk, king of heaven and earth,
 King of Babylon, lord of Ê-sagila,
 King of Ê-zida, King of Ê-makhtilla (the supreme house of life),
 Heaven and earth are thine!
 The circuit of heaven and earth is thine,
 The incantation that gives life is thine,
 The breath* that gives life is thine,
 The holy writing† of the mouth of the deep is thine:
 Mankind, even the black-headed race of Accad,‡
 All living souls that have received a name, that exist in the world,
 The four quarters of the earth wheresoever they are,
 All the angel-hosts of heaven and earth
 Regard thee (and lend to thee) an ear."

"O Lord, the illuminator of darkness, thou that openest the face of
 the sick!
 O Sun-god, king of heaven and earth, director of things above and
 below,
 O Sun-god, thou that clothest the dead with life, delivered by thy
 hands,
 Creator of all thy universe, the Sun-god thou art."

In his stellar character, Marduk is Jupiter, the most important member of the solar family. As such he circulates around himself (as the sun) in twelve years. All the other planets compacted together into one would not equal him in volume. Marduk was like Jupiter, a semi-sun; he is always in the zodiac, and is reckoned as among the most beautiful objects of the heaven.

Like Jupiter, Marduk is everlasting spring and neither summer nor winter; a fit symbol of celestial beauty, "the beauty of the Lord."

There are many elements in Marduk that point to a revival of star-worship in Assyrian times. Certain it is that the planets hold a very

* *Ivat*, or, in Hebrew, *Khavvah*, viz. "Eve."

† The revelations of Êa, who was Oannes of the Deep, are by Assyrians attributed to Marduk.

‡ This probably refers to the black-skinned ancestors of the people of that day.

high position beside the triads. As Marduk in Assyria was identified with Jupiter, so was Nin (or Bar) in Assyria seen in Saturn. He is the Assyrian Hercules, and the Assyrian kings thought, like the Hebrew Psalmist, "Whom have I in the heavens but thee?" Neither on earth did they desire any one else; hence they portrayed him everywhere, and especially in the winged and human-headed bull, Kirubu (Cherub), which is so striking a feature in Assyrian architecture.*

When the Assyrian king identified himself with Saturn, he did not think to bring misery upon himself, but hoped to be the one to bring failure, disease, and disgrace upon his enemies. Hercules is double natured, so is Saturn; they are both chiefs in the World-conflict, "lords of battle." Hergal and Mars were one; so were Nebo and Mercury. The other planets had other powers, but space will not allow a more extended statement.

In conclusion, it must be stated that the Accadian-Chaldean-Assyrian religion was not only speculative, but intensely practical, that is, it manifests itself in prayer, praise, and sacrifice. Numerous prayers and praises have been translated from tablets and inscriptions; but nowhere do the learned find either their cosmological or psychological key, hence the prayers and praises are mere words to them. This is but natural, because the life force of words cannot be described; it belongs to a sphere of power which cannot be conveyed to another like water in a cup. For the same reason will it be useless here to speak about these prayers and praises. But in all of them do we find preserved such root words as convey conceptions connected with primitive animism. In that respect, these prayers are of far more importance than those of Assyrian origin which have come to us. In these, for the most part, the significations are obliterated.

In the above have been given the most important and interesting parts of this old worship. Space permits no more details.

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*A Cherub is an artificial totem. In 700, B.C. Esarhaddon, one of the latest kings of Assyria, placed one at his palace gate, "to turn the wicked against themselves; to protect the footsteps, making peace to be on the path of the king, their creator."

EGYPTIAN MYTHOLOGY

By CHARLES JOHNSTON

HAIL to Thee, Lord God of Law,
 Thee whose shrine none ever saw;
 Lord of Gods, God-Khepera,
 Sailing in thy boat along,
 By whose word the great gods are.
 Thee we hail in song;
 Atmu, maker of mankind;
 Forms to all the men that be,
 Color and variety,
 By his fiat are assigned.
 Unto him the poor men cry,
 And he helps them in distress;
 Kind of heart is he to all,
 Who upon him call,
 God, almighty to deliver
 Him that humble is and meek,
 From the great ones who oppress,
 Judging ever
 'Twixt the strong and weak.

—*The Hymn of Amen Ra.*

THAT one verse, from the greatest hymn we possess of the sacred Egyptian lore, embodies the whole spiritual faith of the Land of Kem. There is the pure and lofty spiritual truth, the worship of the nameless Divinity, the Lord God of Law,—“the only true living God, self-originated, who exists from the beginning, who made all things, but who was himself not made, sole producer of all things both in heaven and earth, but himself not produced of any.”—and, side by side with this, there is the rich symbology and poetical imagery of a gorgeous state religion, in which that One Divinity is hailed by many names, worshiped under many forms, whether it be, as in the verse above, under the names of Khepera, “Creator,” or Atmu, “God of the Sunset,” or Amen Ra, “divinity of the Hidden Sun.”

As in the worship of Islam there are recorded the Thousand Beautiful Names of Allah, as Vishnu and Shiva of India have each a thousand names, a thousand words of praise in the hearts of their worshipers, so the Hidden One in Ancient Egypt was honored under many forms and titles, so that some record a score, some a hundred, and some even as many as a thousand divine names.



Every one of the forty provinces that made up the Two Lands of Upper and Lower Egypt had its special name or names of Divinity, there preëminently worshiped; every city had its special shrines. Thus Memphis worshiped Ptah, Sekhet, and Tum; Thebes reverenced Amen Ra, Maut, Khons, and Neit; An, or Heliopolis, paid signal honor to Tum, Nebebt, and Horus; Elephantiné bowed down before Knep, Sati, Anuka, and Hak. Yet among all this multitude there was no confusion; the One Divinity shone out through many forms.*

Among the unnumbered deities of Egypt, there are two preëminent groups, each of some half-dozen divine personages. There is, first, the great solar cycle of Amen Ra, chiefly worshiped at Memphis or Men-nefer, "the Great City" of Mena or Menes; and, second, the Osiric cycle of far more ancient Thinis or Abydos, where the holy head of Osiris was buried. Neither of these cults can be less than ten thousand years old.

A time is coming when we shall be able to view and understand the far older Egypt which lies behind Mena or Menes, who lived and conquered seven thousand years ago; but with Mena we may for the present begin. Born in Thinis or Abydos of Upper Egypt, he was the first to extend his single dominion down the Nile to the Delta, the first to stretch his scepter over the whole river from the first cataract to the sea. The land thus brought under his sway was one of magical beauty and fertility. Like one of the sacred lotuses of the Nile, it had a long and slender stem, with a bell-shaped blossom growing from it; the long stem was the Nile Valley, which made Upper Egypt a mere gorge or cleft of greenness stretching for hundreds of miles between the wastes of Libya and Arabia; the blossom was the great Delta with its fertile plains divided by the seven sacred streams whereby the Nile poured its waters into the sea, fertilizing the Lower Egyptian land.

*"The religious history of Egypt, from perhaps Dynasty X. to Dynasty XX., is interrupted by an invasion of Semitic conquerors and Semitic ideas. Prior to that invasion the gods, when mentioned in monuments, are always represented by animals, and these animals are the object of strictly local worship. The name of each god is spelled in hieroglyphs beside the beast or bird. The jackal stands for Anup, the hawk for Har, the frog for Hekt, the baboon for Tahuti, and Ptah, Asiri, Hesi, Nebhat, Hat-hor, Neit, Khnum, and Amun-hor are all written out phonetically, but never represented in pictures. Different cities had their different beast-gods. Pasht, the cat, was the god of Bubastis; Apis, the bull, of Memphis; Hapi, the wolf, of Sioot; Ba, the goat, of Mendes. The evidence of Herodotus, Plutarch, and the other writers shows that the Egyptians of each district refused to eat the flesh of the animal they held sacred. So far, the identity of custom with savage totemism is absolute. Of all the explanations, then, of Egyptian animal-worship, that which regards the practice of a survival of totemism and of savagery seems the most satisfactory."

THE SOLAR GODS

UPPER EGYPT, in whose great city of Thinis Mena had his birth, is, in truth, nothing but the bed of the Nile itself. When the great river is at its height, the whole of Upper Egypt is hidden beneath its waters, which flow onward, a majestic tide, stretching from the mountains on the east to the mountains on the west. The river is then some eight or ten miles wide. Only when the floods pass, and the waters sink again, does Upper Egypt come forth to the light: a narrow strip of rich black soil on the east of the river — nowhere an hour's walk from the water's edge to the desert hills; and a like strip, about twice as wide, on the west, from the now diminished river to the Libyan rocks.

The river-bed itself is, therefore, the whole of Upper Egypt. A long strip of black earth with the dwindled stream — which is yet a most majestic river — threading it, lies open to the magical power of the sun, that golden orb of Ra whom the Egyptians celebrated; the divine energy straightway begins to stir the black and formless mud left by the river, bringing forth greenness and life, rich abundance of grain and fruit, well fitted for the sustenance of man. This yearly miracle makes the whole life of Egypt. From the dark pall of the inundation the whole green world comes forth again; the sun enkindles it into life and beauty.

Even sunrise and sunset in that wonderful land of Upper Egypt have in them something miraculous. Night has arched over the valley, with an awesome stillness, its purple robes dotted with brilliant stars that gleam big and luminous, colored jewels hanging in the darkly gleaming dome. Then, from the shadowy hills of the eastern desert, long streamers of rosy cloud shoot upward, and, almost before the stars have time to vanish, the purple of the valley is tinged with a ruddy glow; the whole wide cleft from the mountains to the mountains is filled with colored air; the vale glows with growing flame. The hills, that just now were gloomy indigo, burn brighter and brighter, first purple, then dark red, then with ruddier brightness, till orange bursts into resplendent gold, and the sun flashes forth over the land. Then for hours the golden orb steers his bark through heaven's luminous blue, till he once more draws near to the western mountains. Once again, but now with their order reversed, the gorgeous colors succeed each other. The cliffs, first bright gold, darken to orange, to ruddier richness, to transparent purple, and finally the gloom of night hides the last rose-color of the gleaming sky, and the great stars once more come forth, colored jewels hung in the indigo dome.

These are the images of the sun-god and his power which were ever before the eyes of Ancient Egypt; these are the visible splendors which

called forth the hymns of the Solar gods. Ra the resplendent was the sun himself, to whom the ancient priest thus sang: —

"Praise to Amen Ra we give,
 First of gods, in An the Bull,
 Lord beloved and beautiful,
 By whose warmth fair cattle live
 Hail the king of double throne,
 Chief in Karnak, of his fields
 The mighty head;
 Bull by whom himself was bred,
 Stretching out his feet afar
 Proudly to the southern zone,
 Proudly o'er the Asian plains;
 Lord and prince of Araby,
 Lord of all the breadth of sky,
 Earth's first son,
 Great creator, who sustains
 All that earth or heaven yields. . . .
 Father of the gods and men,
 Maker of the beasts that be,
 Lord of all existences,
 Giver of the fruitful trees,
 Filling house and cattle-pen
 With the staff of daily food.
 Son of Ptah, both fair and good,
 Lo! the gods adore and love;
 By the gods is honor paid
 To the God who all things made —
 Things below and things above.
 Lo, he passes through the sky,
 Sailing in tranquillity,
 Blessing the Two Lands with light.
 King of north and king of south,
 Giving law with truthful mouth,
 Prince of this world, great in might,
 Lord of terror and affright,—
 He who takes
 The earth and makes
 It like to his divinity
 He hath forms, yea, very many,
 More than any
 Other god.
 In his beauties gods rejoice,
 To his praise they lift their voice,
 And adore his name,

When he comes from his abode
 Rising crowned with flame,
 Glorious the Two Lands above.
 He whose fragrances they love,
 Incense-born and dewy-sweet,
 When he comes from Araby,
 When his feet
 Over plains of Asia fly,
 And his smile
 Beams along the land divine,
 Where the Red Sea waters shine
 Southward of the land of Nile." . . .

Here we have the two inspirations: First the pure nature poetry, imaging the sun as he rises resplendent from Araby the Blest, and steering his bark through the blue empyrean over the Two Lands — Upper Egypt of the river gorge, and Lower Egypt of the Delta; and, side by side with this, the deeper inspiration, which sees the visible sun as but the splendid emblem and representative, vicegerent in the visible heavens, of that Sun of Righteousness who illumines the reverent heart.

Even at this time, the sun-god had his conventional form and emblems, every one of them a symbol of some natural and divine power. The same hymn to Amen Ra thus depicts the imaged God: —

“Beautiful with double horns,
 Lord of the Uræus crown,
 Plumed, exalted high to wear
 Snow-white helm, tiara fair,
 With the grace
 Of the serpent, and the disk
 Of the double basilisk,
 As adornment to his face.
 In his own
 Temple are his emblems known:
 Helmet, cap, and double crown;
 Lo, benign of face, he deigns
 Take the Atef crown in hands,
 Crowned with Sekhti crown he stands,
 As the lord of Life he reigns
 With the lotus-handled rod
 And the scourge, a sceptered god.” . . .

The Atef crown was a double-plumed crown above ram's horns; the crown of Sekhti was made by joining the red and white crowns, which denoted the sovereignty of the Two Lands of Upper and Lower Egypt,

first united under the sway of Mena the great conqueror, and founder of Mennufer, or Memphis. But the temple which the poet of this earliest of all religious hymns had in mind is not at Memphis on the Delta's apex; it is the splendid Karnak temple, well called "the noblest effort of architectural magnificence ever produced by the hand of man." At Thebes, where the Karnak temple stands, the cleft of the Nile opens wider than is its wont; the Arabian and Libyan hills sweep round in a broader circle, inclosing a richly fertile amphitheater with the strong Nile stream in its midst. In this favored vale, with the yellow sandstone of the hills shutting it in like a golden crown, is gathered the awe-inspiring splendor of vast columned halls, with mighty pillars molded in the likeness of the sacred lotus, pillars whose towering height answers to their immense girth, rendering the feeling of the whole so magnificent that it has an effect altogether superhuman—we can hardly credit that this tremendous structure came from the hand of mortal man. Add to the temple the long rows of colossal kings, the avenues of Sphinxes, each with its secret solemnly concealed, and, last of all, the soaring obelisks, and we have a temple fitted well to the awful majesty of Amen Ra, the Hidden Sun, who gives life to the mighty universe.

RA SLAYS THE SERPENT

NOR was Amen Ra only the giver of light; he was, not less, the victor over darkness; not only the darkness of night, but also the vast gloom of the chaos, and, most of all, the blacker darkness of the unillumined heart. As the victor over gloom, his worshipers thus saluted him:—



“Gracious ruler, rising bright,
Crowned with crown of silver white:
Lord of rays,
Great creator of the Light,
Unto him the gods give praise,
And he stretches from above
Hands of love to them that love;
But the rebels fall.—His eyes
Fiercely flame upon the foe.
See his arrows pierce the skies,
With their ruddy glow,
And the Naka serpent flies,
And disgorging dies
In the dark below. . . .
King alone,
Of gods the One

Many myriads are thy names—
 Yea, their number is unknown:
 Shining in the golden morn,
 Setting in the golden west,
 Every time that he is born,
 Lo! he scatters with his flames
 All his enemies.
 Thoth exalts his glorious eyes,
 Robes him for his rest,
 With the splendor of his choice;
 In his goodness gods rejoice,
 For he lifteth up the heart.
 Lord of the great boat, he steers
 Every dawn from out the east;
 Lord of the great boat, that nears
 Every night the west,
 Traveling through the sky in rest.
 How thy sailors cheer and shout,
 Seeing Nak the serpent's rout,
 Stabbed and slashed by knife on knife,
 While the flames upon him play,
 All his foul and horrid life
 From his body beaten out,
 And his feet cast right away.
 Then the gods lift up their voices,
 Ra has slaked his soul at length,
 Heliopolis is glad,
 Atmu, closer of the day,
 Is victorious in the fray—
 Heliopolis rejoices;
 And the lady of our life,
 Isis, joys in heart to know
 Of the serpent's overthrow,—
 Apepi, her good lord's foe. . . .
 Saved from out the serpent's maw,
 Image of the gods of law,
 Thou at Karnak by the river,
 Art the lord;
 In thy name of great Lawgiver
 There art thou adored." . . .

Apepi, the Nak-serpent, was the great power of darkness, whether of night in the heavens, or of evil in the heart; and the morning sunrise, with its red and yellow glories over the Arabian hills, was only the image of that greater coming of the Sun of Righteousness, risen with healing in his wings.

THE GOD-MAN OSIRIS



THIS hymn clearly identifies Apepi with Set, the great enemy of the central personage in Egyptian mythology, the man-god Hesiri, whom the Greeks called Osiris. Long before Mena built his city of Mennufer, or Memphis, at the apex of the Delta,—to be the single capital of the Two Lands, the meeting-place of Upper and Lower Egypt,—in the far-away ages of the dawn, the gods ruled among men as their kings. Four gods had already reigned, leading the hearts of men in the ways of wisdom, justice, and mercy, when Hesiri descended upon earth—Hesiri, son of Seb and Nut, the high heaven and the fruitful earth. Joined with Hesiri in his work was Hes, whom later ages called Isis,—at once his sister and his bride, as light and warmth are the wedded twin powers of the visible sun. But the beneficent pair were not free to carry on the good work unmolested; against them was arrayed the adversary Set, with his sister-bride Nebti, the powers of darkness and evil.

Hesiri, with Hes as his helper, set himself to lead and guide the people of the Two Lands, teaching them how to bring forth the golden riches of wheat, how to curb the trailing luxuriance of the vine, so that its strength and sweetness might swell the purple clusters, giving wine that gladdens man's heart; teaching them also the law of justice, and the worship of the ever-present divinity. But Set hated Hesiri for his goodness, and envied him the love of men and their adoration; lying in wait for Hesiri, he slew him, and hiding his body in a coffin, cast it into the Nile.

Swiftly the current bore the bright god's body down the river, carrying it along that narrow cleft of greenness that stretches palm-studded for hundreds of miles between the yellow deserts, and at length sweeping it down through the Delta to the sea. Hes, whom later men called Isis, with Nebti, her sister, sought vainly for the bright god's body; they sought long and in sorrow, till at last they found the sacred dead at Byblus on the Syrian shore, where the waves of the sea had cast the casket forth. Even then, Hes was not permitted to carry home her dead lord and give him quiet sepulture. Set, his envy still unslaked, lying in wait for her return, once more stole the body of Hesiri, and cut it limb from limb, severing it in twice seven fragments. Hes set herself a new quest, and seeking long, brought together again the scattered members of her lord, and, aided by Har, her son, whom the Greeks called Horus, she gathered spices and precious ointments, very costly, wherewith they embalmed the body of Hesiri, so that the dissevered members of the man-god were joined together, and delivered from the bonds of death.

Then Har, the son of Hesiri and Hes, waged relentless war upon Set, to avenge the cruel wrong done to them, and at last Set was utterly subdued and taken captive, bound with many bonds and cast into prison. But the heart of Hes relented toward him who, even though he had so grievously wronged her, was yet her brother, and taking pity upon him, she released him. But her son Har was so wroth at this forgiveness of their foe, that he turned his hand against his mother, and smote her head from her shoulders. Thoth, god of wisdom and hidden knowledge, repaired the mischief by placing the head of a cow upon her shoulders, so that the horned head has ever since been her emblem. Har even then was not satisfied, for still pitilessly pursuing Set, he overtook him, and, again conquering him, smote him and pierced him with a spear so that Set died, and Hesiri was avenged. Har, to whom was also given the name Har-makhu, with his sister Hat-nar, whom later generations called At-hor, were revered by the people, hardly less than their divine parents Hesiri and Hes.

OSIRIS AS THE LORD OF SOULS

THE man-god, thus born upon the earth for the good of men, and sacrificed to the hate and envy of the Adversary, passed, when his earthly life was closed, into the hidden realms of Amen-ti, the Under-world, there to hold dominion over souls. Passing through the gates of death, every soul of man came before Hesiri in the Hall of Truth, where the risen and glorified god sat as judge, with the two-and-forty Lords of Truth, to determine the fate of the bodiless soul. Anubis, the Lord of Weights, brought forth the balance, the twin scales wherein were weighed the deeds of the dead, setting in one scale the emblem of holy truth, and, in the other, the deeds of the man to be judged. Thoth stood beside the balance, ready to record the weighing, to set down the outcome of the test, whether the man's good deeds tipped the scale, or, weighed in the balance, were found wanting.* Then after a solemn silence, while one end or the other of the balance slowly rose, Hesiri, the risen god, pronounced the sentence, and according to his words, so was it with the soul who had come to judgment. If the good deeds of



* Only a part of this interesting ceremony is shown in the illustration: In the Hall of Truth, Anubis, Lord of Weights, weighing the soul of the dead, and Thoth, god of writing, recording the result of the test. To the right of this scene, in the original picture, is Hesiri (Osiris) sitting in judgment, attended by Isis, Nephthys, and four genii, while Har (Horus) is presenting the deceased to the Throne of Judgment. To the left are other figures.

him who stood at that solemn bar of justice had such power and substance as to turn the scale, when weighed against most sacred truth, then the blessed soul, justified and glorified, entered the solar bark, the boat of the Hidden Sun, and was wafted in the company of divine spirits to the happy fields of Aahlu, where are the dwelling of Hesiri and the immortal fountains of living water, the holy pools of peace.

But if not,—if the righteousness of the man was slight and poor, by no means able to turn the scale or outweigh the holy emblem of inviolate truth, then that soul was condemned according to its deeds and defects to darker lives, lives unclean and low, fitted to its own unclean imaginings, there to work out its own salvation through many great and grievous trials. Then came a second judgment, and, where the soul had not turned from its evil, nor cleansed itself from its sin, there followed the second death, great and terrible, from which there was no resurrection, and Shu, the Lord of Light, blotted out even the remembrance of it, so that it was no more at all. But the soul which turned from evil, and sought good only, painfully retracing the steps which it had perversely descended into unclean darkness,—the soul, purified by fire, was raised in glory to dwell with the Lord for three thousand years. Thereafter, coming back from the Hidden Abode of Amenti and passing once more through the gates of birth, it returned to the world of man, once more to labor and aspire after the Light, once more to work for righteousness, until such time as its merit and good deeds should entitle the pilgrim-soul to enter the glorious fields of Aahlu, to be forever with the Lord. There at last, its mystic cycle of wanderings completed, it became one with the boundless Sea of Life, the infinite divine, the Sun of Souls.

These are the words of a soul, thus standing at the awful bar of justice, before the judging god and the Lords of Truth, "I was no idler nor slothful; nor was my name heard in the place of reproof; I gave water to the thirsty, I set the wanderer on his path, I cast down the oppressor, and withstood the man of violence." Another speaks thus, "I was just and true, and without malice; I kept God in my heart, and was quick to discern His will."

THE GOD OF THE NILE

RA WAS god of the visible heavens, as Hesiri was god of the Underworld, the mystic house of souls. Each in his realm was the giver of life, the quickener, the victor over death and darkness. But nearer than the blue empyrean, nearer than the Hidden House of Death, was a symbol of divine power and life, bringing to the very doors of the peo-

ple of Egypt the good gifts that brought life and happiness. This visible emblem of divine power to bless was the sacred river, that Nile which had made the whole Egyptian land, laying down layer after layer of fertile earth in what became Upper Egypt, the Egypt of the long, green cleft through the deserts; and maker not less of the Lower Egypt of the Delta, built up through long years by the same rich abundance of the Nile. At midsummer, when the sun stands high in the crown

of the blue dome, the river has shrunk within its narrowest bed, withdrawn farthest from the bordering mountains, though still a mighty and majestic tide. Shortly the waters begin to be troubled, taking on a hue of greenness, from boundless myriads of water-plants swept by the mighty current from the Abyssinian reaches of the upper river; then the greenness gives way to a turbid ruddiness, and the holy river is seen steadily to rise.



Two months after midsummer, the river, first rising level with the flat Egyptian land, begins to steal forth and spread over it, and the miracle of the inundation is begun. The waters cover the whole Nile Valley, the whole gorge between the eastern and the western mountains, some ten miles wide, and cover, too, the vast level stretches of the Delta; and three months after midsummer, when the sun crosses the celestial equator at the autumnal equinox, the great flood is at its height. Then, having thus reached the climax and culmination of its majesty, the divine power is again withdrawn; the Nile recedes again, and during nine months sinks toward its former level. Through those nine months, all is energy and vital growth through Egypt; through the Two Lands from the Cataract to the sea. First comes the wheat harvest, ripening from early greenness to rich munificence of golden grain; and then the vine with its purple clusters and broad green leaves, the golden pendent dates, and all manner of fruits and herbs that give life and strength to man, and to every beast and bird under heaven.

At Khen-nut by the river-bank, three tablets carved upon the sandstone rock depict a king of ancient Egypt, making an offering to the triple god of Thebes, known under the names of Amen, Mut, and Khonsu, and pouring forth a drink-offering to Har-makhu, Ptah, and Hapi,—this last the spirit of the sacred Nile. One who saw these rites in days of old has thus recorded them: "When the river began to rise, these rites were deemed of so much importance to the Egyptians that unless they were performed at the proper season and in a becoming manner, by the persons appointed to this duty, they felt persuaded that the Nile would refuse to rise and inundate the land. Their full belief in the efficacy of the ceremony secured its annual performance on a grand scale. Men and women assembled, from all parts of the country, to the towns

of their respective provinces. Grand festivals were proclaimed, and all the enjoyments of the banquet were united with the solemnity of a sacred celebration. Music and the dance, and appropriate hymns, marked the respect they felt for the deity; and a wooden statue of the river-god was carried by the priests through the villages, in solemn procession, that all might appear to be honored by his presence, while invoking the blessings he was about to confer."

Here is the hymn which was chanted thousands of years ago, in honor of the sacred river:—

"Hail, all hail, O Nile to thee!
 To the land thyself thou showest,
 Coming tranquilly to give
 Life, that Egypt so may live.
 Amen, hidden is thy source,
 Hidden thy mysterious course,
 But it fills our hearts with glee!
 Thou the gardens overflowest
 With the flowers beloved of Ra;
 Thou for all the beasts that are,
 Glorious river,
 Art life-giver;
 To our fair fields ceaselessly
 Thou thy waters dost supply,
 And dost come
 Through the middle plain descending,
 Like the sun through the mid sky,
 Loving good, and without ending,
 Bringing corn for granary;
 Giving light to every home,
 Oh thou mighty Ptah. . . .
 Bringing food, of plenty lord!
 All good things he doth create;
 Lord most terrible and great,
 Yet of joys divine
 The fount adored,
 He doth in himself combine
 All, and all in love doth join.
 Grass, to fill the oxen's mouth
 He provides; to each god brings
 Victims meet for offerings,
 Choicest incense he supplies.
 Lord of North-land, lord of South,
 He doth fill the granaries,
 Wealth unto the rich man's door
 Adds; and when the poor man cries,

Lo! he careth for the poor. . . .
 Growth, fulfilling all desires,
 Is his law, he never tires;
 As a buckler is his might.
 Not on marble is he scrolled,
 Like a king with double crown;
 Him our eyes cannot behold,
 Priests are needed not by him,
 Offerings to him are not poured,
 Not in sanctuaries dim
 Is he god adored.
 Yea, his dwelling is unknown,
 Never yet in painted shrine
 Have we found his form divine. . . .
 Comes the glorious inundation,
 Then comes joy, and then comes smiles,
 Hearts leap up with exultation;
 Even jag-toothed crocodiles,
 Neith's twin suckling sons, are glad,
 And those gods, we count with thee,
 To earth's glee
 Heavenly joyance add.
 Doth not Nile's outbursting flood
 Overcome all men with good?
 Doth he not, with his sweet waters,
 Bring desire for sons and daughters?
 No man's hand does he employ;
 E'en without the helpful rain
 He can fill our fields with grain,
 And bring to us mortals joy. . . ."

We cannot fail to be struck by the likeness which this hymn bears in its whole spirit, in its words even, to the hymn of Amen Ra. We need not to be told—we can see for ourselves—that whether worshipping the Sun or the River, the Egyptians were paying homage only to the One divinity, the Hidden Sun, the River of Life.

LEGENDS OF THE GODS

BESIDES the Solar and Osiric cycles, there are many legends of the Egyptian deities, some of which have their close affinities in other lands. Thus Seb, god of the world, is represented as taking the form of a goose, and laying the mundane egg,—as in the Kalevala, or in the mythology of India.

Another story tells how Thoth, the god of arcane wisdom, wrote a wonderful book, which told all things concerning the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, and the four-footed beasts upon the earth. He who had mastered even one page of this book, could charm heaven and earth, the great abyss, the mountains, and the seas. Thoth inclosed his wonderful book in a box of gold, this he covered with a box of silver, this with a box of ebony and ivory, this again with a box of bronze; a box of brass inclosed the bronze casket, and finally a box of iron was added, outermost of all. The iron casket Thoth cast into the Nile at Coptos. One of the priests found out where the mysterious casket was hidden, and sold his knowledge to a noble, who had the river dragged, and brought the magic box to light. But it brought him many evils, so that he passed the book on to another, who was in like manner afflicted. The book of Thoth is the Book of Nature, with its secrets seven times hid. He who would use these secrets wrongfully, sows for himself sorrow. He who learns it rightly, can charm every living thing.

Here is a legend of Ra. Ptah had reigned among the divine kings, and Ra succeeded him, reigning long in peace and happiness. But a time came when his subjects, the sons of men, murmured, and planned to revolt against their luminous king. Therefore Ra assembled the gods together, to take counsel of them. The gods said that mankind should be destroyed, and intrusted the task to Hat-har and Sekhet. Fear came upon mankind when they saw their destruction coming, so they made great libations to the gods, and most of all to Ra, and Ra was well satisfied, and the plague was stayed. What remained of the libation, being poured forth, became an inundation, covering the whole land, and hiding it from the destroyers, so that Hat-har could find none to destroy, and the remnant of mankind was saved.

Though there were thus legends of many gods, all the wise knew that they were but forms of the One. Num or Kneph was the creative mind; Ptah, the creative hand; Maut was matter; Khonsu was the moon; Seb was the world; Khem, nature's vital power; Nut was the upper sky; Hat-har, the hidden hemisphere. Thoth was divine wisdom; Hesiri was divine goodness; Amen was divine mystery. Yet all gods were the one God. Therefore Amen is likewise addressed as Ra or Khem or Tum or Har or Khepera; Hapi or Apis, the Nile-god and sacred bull of fertility, is also spoken of as Amen and Ptah. Hesiri, or Osiris, is invoked as Ra and Thoth; and in like manner the darker powers, Apepi, Set, Bes, Taourt,— who are, as it were, the clouds and shadows of creation,— are mingled together. And in the deepest wisdom, these two are but ministers of the One.

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PHŒNICIAN MYTHOLOGY

By *BLISS CARMAN*

THE Phœnician cosmogony is particularly interesting in containing many of the ideas which we find in the theogony of the Greeks and Romans who followed them. The Phœnicians, like their neighbors, the Jews, were a Semitic race, and imposed their peculiar religious ideas upon their Aryan successors in the civilized world, in much the same way that Hebrew conceptions of religion have been imposed in later times. Indeed, these two Asiatic tribes, the Jews and the Phœnicians, may be said to represent two distinct and adverse types of thought in religious matters,—the monotheistic and the polytheistic. That the purer religion and nobler morality of the Jews survived the contaminating influence of their neighbors with the utmost difficulty is evident on almost every page of the Old Testament. The abominations of Baal and Ashtoreth are the continual theme of lamentation of the Hebrew teachers. And the nearer view we get of the character of those heathen divinities, the more revolting do they appear.*

In the mythology of the Greeks and Romans, with which our classical education has made us familiar, the gods and goddesses are

* Without doubt the Phœnician, like all other religions, had its esoteric and higher side; but that has not come down to us, the dry and somewhat soiled symbol being all that remains.—EDITOR.

comparatively innocuous deifications of natural phenomena; they take their places in our mind as interesting characters, very human in their faults, and usually beneficent in their acts toward mankind. It would appear, however, that this humane and civilized character of the Greek and Latin divinities was only the likeness of their own character and reflected their better civilization. As we trace the ancestry of the gods back to its source, we find them more and more ruthless, cruel, and bloodthirsty, just as we find the people who worshiped them more heartless and savage. This, of course, is equally true of Jewish religion from which the loftier conceptions of Christ are finally evolved. So it is to be remembered that in studying a mythology we are studying the soul of a people.

The mythology of Phœnicia, as far as we can trace it, is an unlovely exhibition. In comparison with Melkarth and Dagon, the Hebrew Jehovah, relentless and selfish as he was, must be admitted to have displayed traits that were at least gentlemanly if they were not always gentle. But to consider the Phœnician divinities fairly, we should rather compare them with the mumbo-jumbos of Africa or the horrific gods of the outlandish islands of the Pacific, where human sacrifices and bloody practices still survive.

Our chief authority for any detailed account of the Phœnician cosmogony is one of their own writers, Sanchoniathon, a native of Tyre, who wrote about the time of the Trojan War. His history contained an account of the religion and theology of his own people. This work was translated into Greek by Philo of Byblus, in the time of Adrian; but unfortunately both original and translation have been lost, save a few fragments preserved by Eusebius.

In the beginning, according to Sanchoniathon, there was only "a spirit of dark air, and a turbid obscure chaos; and these things were infinite, and for many ages had no bounds; but when the spirit was affected with love toward its own principles, and a mixture followed, that conjunction was called desire. This was the beginning of the formation of all things; but the spirit did not acknowledge its own production."

From this primal and vague condition proceeded the "seed of all creatures and the generation of the universe." And the first mortals created were Protogonus and Æon, who discovered the fruits which are good for food, and whose children Genus and Genea dwelt in Phœnicia. But in a time of great drought, "they stretched forth their hands to heaven toward the sun; for him they thought the only god and lord of heaven, calling him Beelsamon, which in Phœnician is 'lord of heaven,' and in Greek, Zeus." Afterward, Genus had three sons, Phos, Phur, and Phlox,—that is light, fire, and flame,—who found

out how to make fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together. These in their turn begat sons of great stature who gave their names to the surrounding mountains, Libanus, Cassius, etc., and again had other sons. Among this latter generation were Memrumus and Hypsuranius. "The latter inhabited Tyre, and invented the making of huts of reeds and meshes of the papyrus."

"Many years after this generation came Agreus and Halieus, the inventors of the art of hunting and fishing, from whom huntsmen and fishermen are named. Of these were begotten two brothers, the discoverers of iron and its use; one of these, called Chrysor, the same as Hephæstus or Vulcan, exercised himself in words, charms, and divinations; and he found out the hook and means of taking fish, and boats slightly built; he was also the first of all men that sailed. . . . Afterward from this generation came two brothers, one of whom was called Technites, or the artist, the other Genius Antochthan, the home-born man of the earth. These found out how to mingle stubble, or small twigs, with the clay, and to dry it in the sun, and so make bricks."

We then come to a part of this demiurgic genealogy which bears resemblance to the Greek, and shows where the Greeks derived some of their heavenly personages.

"In that period there was one Elion, which imports in Greek the Most High (Hypsistus); and by him were begotten Uranus and Ge. . . . Hypsistus, the father of these, dying in a fight with wild beasts, was consecrated, and his children offered sacrifices and libations to him. But Uranus, taking the kingdom of his father, married his sister Ge, and by her had four sons, Cronus (Saturn), Betylus, Dagon, and Atlas. . . . But when Cronus came to man's age, using Hermes Trismegistus as his counselor and assistant, he opposed his father Uranus, drove him out of his kingdom, and succeeded in the imperial power.

"In process of time, Uranus, being in flight or banishment, sends his virgin daughter, Astarte, with two others of her sisters, Rhea and Dione, to cut off Cronus by deceit, whom Cronus persuaded to become his wives. Uranus, understanding this, sent Eimarmene and Hera, with other auxiliaries, to war against him; but Cronus having gained the affections of these also, kept them with him."

Sanchoniathon also tells us that "Cronus, going about the world, gave to his own daughter, Athena, the kingdom of Attica; but when there was a plague and mortality, Cronus made his only son a whole burnt offering to his father Uranus." This example of their divine progenitor was only too faithfully followed in later times by the Phœnicians in their worship of Baal, when human sacrifice became common.

"All these things," says Eusebius, "the son of Thabion, who was the first hierophant that ever was among the Phœnicians, allegorized, and

mixing the facts with physical and mundane phenomena, he delivered them down to those that celebrated orgia, and to those prophets who presided over the mysteries, who always contrived to improve their fables, and so delivered them down to their successors, and to those that were afterward introduced among them, one of whom was Isiris the inventor of three letters, the brother of Chna, the first Phœnician, as he was afterward called.”

This admission of the Greek historian gives one some idea of the uncertainty we labor under in investigating the earliest mythology. Indeed, the writings of Sanchoniathon are palpably too vague to be of scientific value, yet they are interesting as our prime authority on the subject. Our definite knowledge of the worship of the Phœnicians, however, is derived from many sources, and gathers about a few names of their leading divinities. The Phœnician mythology was an astronomical mythology. Baal, their chief god, was the sun-deity; while Astarte, his rival in the affections of the people, was the moon.

For some notion of the character of Baal we need only recall our Bible reading, where the enormities of that monstrous deity are often referred to. Baal became identified with Cronus or Saturn (who personified Time), and with Moloch, was the lord of heaven; and to him human sacrifices were made as propitiation in adversity. Against this abominable custom the voice of Jewish morality was constantly protesting.

With Baal is often mentioned Ashtoreth or Ashtaroth, who is the Astarte of the Phœnicians and who is to be identified with the later Venus and Aphrodite of the Latins and Greeks. In her character as goddess of love, and in all the attendant rites celebrated in her honor in that connection, we trace resemblances between her worship and that of the Cyprian queen. Astarte, however, was also identified by the Greeks and Romans with their Hera or Juno, in her capacity as queen of heaven and protectress of women, while as the moon-goddess she was sometimes identified with Diana. In all of her phases, under all of her names, however, this great Asiatic goddess is chiefly to be remembered as the deity of love,—not in our nobler comprehensive sense a god of love, but a divinity who presided over the mere elementary and primitive instincts of love. As such she is Tanis to the Persians, Mylitta to the Babylonians, Astarte or Ashtoreth to the Phœnicians and their colony at Carthage, Aphrodite throughout Hellas, and Venus throughout the empire of Rome.

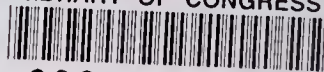
Under Ethbaal, king of Tyre, who was also high-priest of Astarte, Phœnician religion was introduced among the Jews. This king married his daughter Jezebel to Ahab, king of Israel, with the express purpose







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