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JOURNAL OF
THE TRANSACTIONS
OF
The Victoria Institute,
OR,
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GENERAL SECRETARY:
E. J. SEWELL.

LECTURE SECRETARY:
E. WALTER MAUNDER, F.R.A.S.

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588TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,
HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, ON MONDAY, MARCH 19TH, 1917,
AT 4.30 P.M.

MR. E. WALTER MAUNDER, F.R.A.S., *Lecture Secretary*,
TOOK THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the preceding Meeting were read and confirmed.

The SECRETARY announced the election of Mrs. Hayward Potter as an Associate of the Institute.

The CHAIRMAN, in introducing the Lecturer, reminded the Meeting of the important part which Sir Charles Warren had taken in the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund in the years 1867-1870. They would therefore have the privilege that evening of listening to one who was directly and personally an expert on the subject before them.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE. By Gen. Sir CHARLES WARREN, G.C.M.G., F.R.S.

MY address this evening is on the Geography of Palestine, viewed in the light of its being the Land Promised of God to His Chosen People: one aspect being the *physical features* of the country adapting it to be the home of the Chosen People, the other being the *situation* of the country relative to the rest of the world, especially the great empires of antiquity.

Of course there is a want of material for this purpose—nothing can be laid down with great precision; and my object this evening is not so much to show the effect of the physical features upon the actions of the Chosen People, as to call attention to the possible effects of their environment, and to emphasize the possibility—nay, the necessity—for each one of us to judge for himself of the early days of Israel, by making a study of the manners and customs of primitive peoples. These manners and customs are much the same all the world over, and can be studied in this country as amongst primitive tribes; and the most useful book for the study is the Bible.

It is usual to suppose that in this quest it is necessary to possess the power of acquiring languages readily, but though this gift is most useful as an accessory, the chief requirement is the power of observation, and the chief work to be done is the

development of that power; and this is a paying concern, as it fits us also for all the duties of life.

During the years I have spent in contact with primitive people I have found that, underlying the customs which went to make up their religion, there was always a natural religion which seems very much the same everywhere, and which, when you have once got a grip of, you find that you can get along with the people.

It was on account of this knowledge that, at the commencement of the Egyptian Campaign, 1882, I volunteered, with confidence, to go on a mission to the Arabs of the east of the Suez Canal, to gain their adherence to our side. I did not know any of them, but having lived amongst the Bedouin of Palestine, I was satisfied that I could manage them. In my scheme, sent from Chatham to London, 10th August, 1882, I proposed to go into the desert with three assistants, to keep watch day and night against the only dangers I apprehended—assassination and poison. On the 26th of August I was on my way to Suez, for work in the desert under the Admiral Commanding-in-Chief, and I was engaged for several months in bringing to light the facts concerning the murder of Professor Palmer and his companions; and I traversed a great portion of the ground occupied by Israel in the Wilderness of the Wanderings. I have thus had some opportunity for forming an opinion as to the effect of the physical features of the country on the character of the people. At the same time, I must point out that there are two matters which very much reduce the apparent effect of the physical features upon the people: one is the overwhelming might of the Egyptian and Assyrian powers when in contact with Israel, and the other is the irresistible power of the Almighty when wielded on the side of Israel.

In the ordinary work of the world we do not know whether there is any direct interposition in favour of nations that try to do the will of God; but in the case of the Chosen People the action of the Almighty is laid bare before us, and of course it transcends all other cause and effect.

There is another matter which I may be pardoned for alluding to, and that is the question how far people speaking different languages can make themselves understood to each other when engaged on the same work, when it is of a nature agreeable to the Almighty. My impression is that people who are acting in the right way do recognize each other without the necessity of speech. It will often be noticed that in a just cause the most

antagonistic sects and individuals will sink their differences and work together with no apparent discussion of the subject. It is in the East, where there are so many antagonistic sects, that one best notices this. I will instance a case in point. When I was at Suakim in 1886 I met a Sheikh from the interior, who told me that he had been a great friend of General Gordon; and I questioned him as to their conversation together. He said they were sitting together on a mat, and that General Gordon said to him in Arabic: "We are working together in the same cause," and that he replied in Arabic, "If you are content, I am content." I asked what more they said; he replied: "Nothing more: we exchanged thoughts."

THREE DOMINANT MATTERS IN PALESTINE.

(1) It has unique geographical features which influence its climate, and to some extent its food, owing to a great fissure on the earth's surface called the Jordan Valley.

(2) Its geographical position is also unique. In early days it was not only the sole line of communication between the great centres of the ancient world, Egypt on the south, and Babylonia, Assyria, and Elam on the north, but its configuration and mountainous character made it a point of vantage in the struggles constantly going on between the nations of old; and at the present day its position possesses potentially a great military value.

(3) Lastly, it was selected by the Almighty as the cradle of the religion that is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

These matters, however, only act in conjunction with others which also have their effect on the condition of mankind, and which I will briefly enumerate and give some account of—matters affecting national character:—

1. Racial Characteristics which permanently influence the doings of a people, and which cannot be eradicated or be abnormally developed, because they are part and parcel of the race.
2. (a) The effect of tradition and civilization in the past.
(b) The effect of civilization in the present day.
(c) Environment.
3. Training—
 - (a) Amongst savage races.
 - (b) Amongst civilized races.
 - (c) Obstacles to be overcome.
 - (d) Patriotism.

4. Geographical conditions affecting a nation
5. Revelation and religion, as contrasted with superstition and errors.
6. The direct interposition of the Almighty exercised in the sight of the whole world.

(1) RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS.

It is well understood that races possess permanent and dominant characteristics which differ in each. Children in a family, however they may differ in appearance, disposition, and temper, possess potentially the same character—that of the race. Vicissitudes and struggle for existence may dwarf a tribe, but it will regain its standard condition when it returns to favourable circumstances. A tribe may at one time be strung up to a high pitch of excellence, and at another time it may slacken off to a very low pitch, but it cannot change absolutely beyond its limits. Some races are born to dominate and some to serve. History gives instances of races which under trials have shaken off their sloth, as did Israel at the Exodus, the Spartans and the Sikhs; but it was all within limits which could not be exceeded. Influences affect different races, and affect even the same race, differently under different circumstances. A timid, feeble tribe, to-day, suffering any amount of indignity and oppression, may to-morrow, by indiscreet handling, be converted into an enthusiastic fighting race in defence of their rights or their homesteads, for which they will struggle to the last. Or they may catch on to some religious idea under one of the fanatical leaders that arise from time to time. Geographical conditions affect different races differently, stimulating some to exertion and reducing others to sloth. In the long run, however, race characteristics must tell, and can never be eradicated, though the race itself may be destroyed.

As to the Chosen Race, the raw material of their characteristics cannot have varied very much from that of other Semitic tribes, but training and early habits and customs, and the application of the Law, have given them a strong bias against the worship of false gods.

(2) THE EFFECT—

(a) *of Tradition and Civilization in the Past.*

Tradition has a very potent effect on all races, and the rulers realize and act upon it. By tradition a race is induced to

submit to oppression, whilst the elderly men enjoy all the good things in this world ; as in the ancestor worship, transmigration of souls, and hell-punishment of Buddhists and Hindoos. They are all invented to keep the bulk of the people in order whilst under oppression. Amongst the more savage races the rulers use witchcraft and sorcery for a similar object. Working on the fears of the people through tradition is also employed for good purposes. The Moslem Arabs of the present day people the desert with jinn and genii, the fear of which tends to keep order and honesty and a code of honour where no law and order exists. The Israelites in their wanderings seem to have had the same idea of the jinn as the Bedouin have of the present day. Where the fear of God is feeble in a race, in the interests of law and order some belief in and fear of supernatural agencies is a necessity ; and so long as it is not perverted to the means of injustice by the rulers, it acts well. Although the Bedouin are keen for murder and theft at all times, yet we may rely on their honour and honesty provided certain ceremonies are performed.

I found that my knowledge of jinn and demons, from reading Arabian stories, enabled me to get a good deal of honest work out of the Bedouin and other primitive tribes.

Even civilized races must rely upon the supernatural for keeping law and order amongst those who have no fear of God's Law ; and it seems to me that we have in our own country been taking great risks during the last sixty years in sweeping out all tradition without adequately putting the fear and love of God in their place in the minds of the children.

We have done it so thoroughly and effectually that there has been made a clean sweep from the minds of the children of all tradition and local history and folk-lore, and at the same time we have managed to get rid of all the country fairs and meetings, all the games and fun, that used to go on in the country-side, together with all the interesting stories, historical and mythical ; so that the children's minds are absolute blanks in regard to anything but the four walls of the school-room. No wonder that when they leave school they wish to get away from the country which had been made so uninteresting to them, and gather together in the towns. Life is much more interesting when every locality has its local tradition, weird or otherwise, and when by means of fairy tales and local traditions the whole world is peopled with sprites and elves ; and I may state my conviction that children who are accustomed to such lore are far more likely to do well in the world, as all fairy

tales and legends are based on the fundamental idea that your sin will find you out.

Amongst the Israelites of old, everything in nature was endowed with some super life, and sprites and demons and jinn abounded in all deserted places; and above all was the majesty of the Almighty riding on the whirlwind, controlling the tempest, with the winds and floods obeying Him: "Wind and storm obeying His word."

(b) *of Civilization of the Present.*

The present war is teaching us that civilization without the fear of God is a danger to nations.

(c) *Environment.*

The effect of environment is well seen in the influence on the Israelites of the adjoining and surrounding heathen.

(3) TRAINING—

(a) *Amongst Savage Races or Primitive People.*

Amongst savage races there may be some whose intellects are quite as keen as those of the highest in Europe, whilst on the other hand there are others who have only the intellects of children.

Thus individuals may be trained to a high pitch of excellence, but not so the race itself. Here lies the difficulty with native tribes in South Africa. A tribe cannot receive the same laws as white men, yet members of the tribe may be better educated and more highly civilized than the average white man.

In a surveyor's office in South Africa I have seen blanket Kaffirs working out abstruse mathematical problems, and I have conversed all day with a Kaffir guide from Lovedale College, and failed to find any difference between his mind and that of a European.

If the children of savage races are taken in hand early enough, they will form habits which are lasting.

(b) *Amongst Civilized Races.*

No more striking instance in all history can be cited than the training of our nation for war since 1914, and only one reason can be given for the thoroughness and celerity with which it has been carried out, and that is that the hearts of all were in the job.

On the other hand, in the case of the Israelites, their bodies were trained to fight in a year, but for the work before them their hearts were in their stomachs, and it took forty years to allay the hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and then only by killing off all the old people who had formed their habits in Egypt. Of the effect of early training on the mind I will give a case in point. I was acquainted with a converted Jew at Jerusalem, who told me that he was in great distress because his conversion was only partial, in that for several hours of the day his early habits influenced him and he returned to his very strict order of Judaism; during the remaining part of the day he was an earnest Christian, and there seemed to be no means of altering his habits. I looked upon him as being really an earnest Christian, and he subsequently lost his life at Safed in giving his testimony as a Christian.

I may cite another instance of the effect of early habits.

On board a troopship it is difficult to get soldiers to sing hymns at a parade service, or in daylight, on Sundays—they are too shy; but get them together in the dark in any part of the ship, and they will sing hymns together for hours with the greatest fervour, returning in thought to their boyhood at home. Then when a lantern is introduced, and they see each other, the illusion vanishes and they are mute.

(c) *By Encountering Difficulties.*

Where there is grit in a nation there is no healthier method of advancement than encountering obstacles. Reading without tears, and other approved methods of evading difficulties, are not healthy methods. This is the secret of the Boy Scout movement: the boys are taught to come up smiling to their difficulties, tackle them and overcome them.

We have two splendid examples of nations overcoming obstacles, in Holland and Switzerland: the former in reclaiming their land from the sea, and the latter in preserving themselves free from the encroachments of the great nations surrounding them.

(d) *Patriotism.*—In a small degree.

(4) GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS AFFECTING NATIONS.

The physical features of a country may affect a nation by means of its climate and food, by inducing industry or sloth, and by affecting the temperament of a people by its configuration.

The Climate of Palestine.

The climate differs from that of other parts of the Mediterranean seaboard, owing to peculiar physical conditions on its eastern side.

Stretching right away from the Taurus, on the north, to the Gulf of Akaba on the south, is a great fissure or crack upon the earth's surface, forming the valley of Coele-Syria and the Jordan Valley. This fissure is the deepest depression visible on the earth's surface, and gives the peculiar characteristics to Palestine. The waters of Jordan, commencing nearly at the level of the ocean at the southern foot of Hermon, at Dan, run into the Lake of Galilee at a depth of 600 feet below the ocean, and into the Dead Sea at 1300 feet below the ocean; from the southern end of the Dead Sea the bottom of the depression rises some hundreds of feet towards Akaba, so that the waters are quite cut off from the ocean.

The Jordan has a very rapid fall of about 10 feet in a mile between Galilee and the Dead Sea, and is justly called the Descender. For thousands of years this river has existed for no purpose except as a boundary, and is waiting to be utilized. There have been schemes for irrigating the whole plain of the Jordan from Galilee, but nothing has been done. There is wealth in these waters, and now that the world will want money, the Jordan may come into its own. In prehistoric times this fissure of the Jordan is assumed to have been an arm of the sea, open to the ocean at Akaba, but owing to the rise of the land it has been cut off for a very long period and has been reduced in volume by evaporation until there is nothing left of it but the scanty waters of the Dead Sea, which contains in its bosom all the salt which was once contained in this arm of the sea. This Jordan fissure has been subject to volcanic outbursts, of which there are many indications at the present day, one of which is a line of hot springs from north to south. The level of the Dead Sea rises and falls yearly within certain small limits, according to the amount of water coming into it from the Jordan and its tributaries, the input being balanced by the evaporation. All evidence goes to show that since the earliest historical times there has been no sensible change in the level of the Dead Sea; so that the physical condition of the valley is practically the same as it was at the dawn of history. To the west of the Jordan Valley is the mountain chain of Palestine, stretching from the east of Dan to Beer-Sheba, about 120 miles. This range is about 2000 to 3000 feet above the ocean, and

slopes down to the west in swelling hills, terminating in the rolling plains of Esdraelon, Sharon and Philistia, bordering on the Mediterranean.

To the east are the purple walls of Moab. The effect of this valley, so far below the level of the ocean, is to cause a tropical climate and a semi-tropical vegetation within the lower portion of the depression, giving to eastern Palestine fruits and vegetables of a more southern clime.

In winter-time the heat of the valley is tempered by the cold winds from the Lebanon, and Hermon to north; but as the snow melts on the mountains, the heat in the valley rises and becomes excessive, registering over 110 degrees F. at sunrise in the summer, and rendering life about the Dead Sea insupportable to Europeans. To what extent this abnormal climate may affect the residents of Palestine we have no means of judging, as the Bedouin ascend the slopes of the hills as the summer advances, and the few fellahin living at Jericho do not appear to go down to the Dead Sea.

We have no certainty of any large cities existing about the Dead Sea after the destruction of the Cities of the Plain, but there were large cities at Jericho and other sites below the level of the ocean, and magnificent gardens and highly cultivated lands; and it is to be noted that all the great cities of the New Testament about the Sea of Galilee were about 600 feet below the level of the ocean. It may, therefore, be concluded that the only part of the valley that was avoided was the vicinity of the Dead Sea.

There is no evidence to show what effect this abnormal climate had upon the character of the people, but the physical features no doubt had an effect on the minds and thought of the people, reflected in the imagery of the Psalms.

Much has been written on this subject, but when a Chosen People are under the shadow of the Most High it seems to me impossible to conjecture the effect of scenery upon their minds.

Physical Features and Industry.

At the time of the Exodus the Promised Land was termed a land flowing with milk and honey, and this is usually accepted as meaning a land of herds and flocks; but it was also "a land of brooks of water, of fountains, of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of oil-olive and honey."

Now we find two conditions of the land at present. Where the hill-country has been neglected, the mountain sides have been washed quite bare of all soil, which is heaped up in the

valleys, so that there is very little vegetation or produce, but where capital and labour have been expended a great change takes place.

In the hill-country, even now, the white skeletons of the old systems of terracing are visible in parts; but the rich loamy soil is washed down into the wadies, leaving the hillsides bare and desolate and glaring in their nakedness. A cultivated strip may be seen at the bottom of the wady, subject to being swept away by any storm of rain, forming a torrent down the bare hillsides or withered away before its time by the reflection of the sun from the bare rocks. Place the valley in proper hands, and note the results. The earth from the bottom will be carefully carried up the hillsides, and laid out in terraces supported by stone walls, on which are planted young fruit-trees—those of a more delicate kind being placed on the northern declivity in order that they may not suffer from the sun's rays. The trees thrive rapidly; as they do in Palestine; the rain falls, but not as before, rushing fiercely down the bare rocks and forming a torrent in the valley. No; now it falls on the trees and terraces, percolates quietly into the soil, and into the rocky hillside, and is thus absorbed, without injuring the crops at the bottom of the valley. The rain that sinks into the rocks will shortly reissue in perennial springs, so refreshing in a thirsty land. The trees having now moisture at their roots, spread out their leaves in rich groves over the land. The sun's rays do not fall on the ground, but on the green leaves and fruit, by which they are intercepted and absorbed, giving no glare or reflection. The heat of the sun causes a moisture to rise from the trees and soil beneath them, which, on reaching the higher and cooler winds, is condensed into visible vapour—clouds—constantly forming as the breeze passes over the grove, so that, so to speak, each grove supplies its own umbrella. The climate is thus changed. Where were hot glaring sun, dry wind, dry earth, stony land, absence of verdure, are now to be found fleecy clouds floating through the balmy air, the heat of the sun tempered by visible and invisible vapours, groves with moist soil, trickling streamlets issuing from the rocks, villages springing up apace, with fair arable lands below them—Palestine regenerated. This is no dream: I have seen this change take place in Palestine on a small scale in three years.

Thus the fertility of the land depends in a high degree on the industry and security of the people; and the hard work they have to perform cannot have failed to develop the character of the people.

“All the Syrian religions reflect the Syrian climate. Israel alone interprets it for moral ends, because Israel alone has a God Who is absolute righteousness. Here again is another instance of those many points at which the geography of Palestine exhausts the influence of the material and the seen, and indicates the presence on the land of the unseen and the spiritual.” (*H.G.H.J.*, p. 76.)

The Desert of the Wanderings.

Generally in January and February there is plenty of rain over the Tih—so much so that water for drinking, both for man and beast, can be found every few miles in the plain, and all over the hills. During November, December and March there are often dense mists, moist fogs, and heavy dews, which saturate the shrubs with moisture, and even deposit moisture amongst the rocks, so that flocks do not require to go to water. These mists depend upon the wind, and often alternate with intense droughts. The rainfall may roughly be estimated at 12 inches per annum. Sheep do not thrive during the hot weather, but goats seem to enjoy it. There are no cattle. The Bedouin congregate together during the summer near the springs of water and palm-groves. In the spring they have grass and water everywhere, and are free to go where they like. In winter they are in great straits, for they have to go where they can find herbage, and yet have to drive their flocks to water, sometimes a distance of twenty miles or more. This they do about twice a week, sending their camels for water for the camp when they have quite run out of it. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the Bedouin do not grow corn. Each tribe has its cultivated land (as well as its palm groves), and they grow as much corn as they require for their sustenance.

The Peninsula of Sinai.

The rainfall in the peninsula is at the present time considerably less than in the desert of the Tih, and the drought is excessive. It is ascribed to the gradual decrease of the trees—since the Egyptian government imposed a tax of charcoal on the Bedouin. There are the remains, in the valleys, of cultivated lands abandoned for years on account of the drought. In these places there still exist the corn magazines and watch houses. Every Bedouin family has its garden of palm-trees—the date stones are boiled down for the goats.

Egypt and Palestine.

Amongst early Semitic people a wide distinction was drawn between land irrigated by man and land watered from the sky or by streams, the latter belonging to the gods.

“For the land whither thou goest to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt, whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst with thy foot, as a garden of herbs :

“But the land whither ye are passing over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, of the rain of heaven it drinketh water ; a land which Jehovah thy God Himself looketh after ; continually are the eyes of Jehovah thy God upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.”

Food.

I do not know what the present up-to-date view is as to the differentiation of mankind, but I suppose that I may assume that “before the close of the palæolithic times all the primary divisions of mankind were specialised in their several habitats by the influence of their surroundings,” and that these differences are permanent so far as the short space occupied by history is concerned. The principal influences are climate, food, soil, natural boundaries, and the general aspect of nature.

These influences, however, have had their say in past times, and during the comparatively short space occupied by historical times we cannot expect to find that they can have had any appreciable effect upon Israel on moving from Egypt to the wilderness, or again into the Land of Canaan, in affecting their permanent characteristics.

There are, however, other aspects of the subject connected with food which we may consider. The manner of living in Egypt, in the desert, and in Canaan, was profoundly different, giving rise to different customs. For example, the treatment of the stranger and the laws of hospitality are part of the life of all primitive races, differentiated by the surroundings of nature.

Without the general convention concerning the stranger and hospitality, races could have had no communication with each other except in a hostile manner ; without these common laws, the various trade routes would not have been immune : without them, Ulysses' voyages would have ended in disaster, and Livingstone and Stanley could not have forgathered in Darkest Africa.

The code of Israel was enriched under the Law by many

advances on the old rules, and by it chivalry was first introduced to the world, but the old rules of natural religion continued in force.

As these rules govern all life amongst primitive people, I will give some instances of their application in modern times.

The Good Offices of the Star Smaiyeh.

The star Smaiyeh is connected amongst the Bedouin with a legend about Moses, and they consider it unwise to undertake a journey when it is approaching the moon. In September, 1882, Smaiyeh was approaching the moon, and they were much concerned about it in connexion with the war. It is the star depicted on the Turkish ensign, within the Crescent, and the Moslems expected great help from it.

This star played a very important part with us towards the close of our proceedings in the desert, as I will relate.

After the murderers of Professor Palmer and his comrades had been brought to justice, I went into the desert to erect a great stone cairn and wooden cross on a conspicuous hill overlooking the spot where the murder was committed. Miss Charrington and her brother were present, and we established the memorial with much ceremony, and consecrated the ground according to Christian rites; but we all agreed that it ought also to be consecrated effectually according to local Bedouin customs, and I consulted the Bedouin and Egyptians present as to what we could do in the matter. It so happened that at that time a cheery old Bedouin fell very ill, and was left near our camp by his comrades to take his chance. This man we brought into a tent and tended, and, on his turning the corner, he expressed great gratitude to us all, especially to Miss Charrington, who had been very kind to him. In conversation with him, I stated my anxiety to get the cairn and cross made taboo to the Bedouin, and the matter evidently very much dwelt on his mind, as during the night he had a vivid dream concerning it.

He related to the Bedouin and to us that he had seen the star Smaiyeh come down from heaven and gather up all the souls of the murdered ones into his bosom and carry them up to the cairn and deposit them there, and subsequently carry them back to the wady. This made the spot taboo to the Bedouin, and the dream was given out through the desert and the place was not molested.

The taboo of the desert is, as far as I have observed, entirely in favour of law and order.

Our Desert Cook and his Brother.

The cook I employed in the desert was half-brother to one of the principal murderers for whom we were looking, and who was eventually convicted and executed; and the employment of this cook caused me many remonstrances from amongst those Europeans who did not understand the customs of the Bedouin.

In the first place, this murder was not wholly approved amongst the Bedouin, as there was a smack of disregard of ancient usage about it. It was a doubtful case, and not entirely in keeping with the laws of hospitality, which are the first laws of all primitive people—need I say of all people who have any religion. In the second place, I knew that our cook did not entirely approve of his brother, and that if he had the moral courage to stay with us, we should be comparatively safe from poison, which was our principal danger. This is how I looked at it. The cook knew that if we were poisoned he would be deemed guilty, and would be hunted down with the others; whereas if he acted in good faith he might in some manner help his brother. Of course, after his brother was executed there was an end of the matter; he had admitted his guilt, and the cook could serve us with a clear conscience. My view was that the cook, knowing that he would be suspected, would take every precaution against *anyone else* poisoning us, and so I looked upon his being a safeguard instead of a danger. I mention this case because it shows how differently the subject can be looked at—of course, as there were other lives than my own concerned, I had to convince the authorities on the spot that I had reason on my side, and they took a practical view of all these matters.

In all countries outside civilization one has to guard against poison in food, and sometimes one has to take very odd precautions.

At Suakim, where I was Governor in 1886, I found at Government House convicts of the deepest dye told off as our official servants and boatmen, and I chose a well-known poisoner to make the coffee, which is always served to visitors, and I did this as a precaution against poisoning. The face of the Chief Civil Intelligence Officer may be imagined when he was first served with coffee by the hands of such a convict, but when I gave my reason he quite agreed with me. Of course, as the host I had, in accordance with ancient custom, always to drink before my guests, and I may say I was not unmindful of the convict, who always drank the first cup of coffee of each brew!

(5) RELIGION, NATURAL AND POSITIVE.

To estimate the effect of religion upon a race, we must know exactly what is meant by the term.

In the early days of Israel there were only two forms of religion in existence: namely, the natural religion of all the world, differing according to tribe; and the positive religion to which the Israelites were subjected at Sinai.

Natural religion is a method of disciplining the mind, by the discipline of the body, for the purpose of ensuring the safety of society. No nation can ever have existed as an organized body without mental discipline. Human laws alone, the keeping of which depends upon the punishment of those found breaking them, cannot possibly keep a nation in order alone, as the individual will only act up to them as long as he thinks he will be found out.

Natural religion consisted of ritual observances which were part of the tribal organization, and which each person was bound to perform or be denationalized. The god was local, belonging to the land where the people dwelt, and was one with the people.

There are several interesting questions to consider. How did Palestine come to be considered as the land of Jehovah, when it was already occupied by the gods of the tribes dwelling there. Was it handed over to the seed of Abraham at the Call of Abraham, and were the Canaanites looked upon as usurpers; or was it rendered taboo to the Canaanites in later times owing to the idolatries practised there? Were the Israelites aware that the God of Abraham differed from the gods of the surrounding people whilst they were in Egypt? Our historical accounts recognize that God was supreme over the whole earth, but the rank and file of the Israelites may not have been aware of it. Again, what form of worship did Israel have in Egypt? To what extent were they given up to the gods of Egypt? As the whole organization of the people must have depended upon what they knew about themselves, I have, in considering their condition at the Exodus, assumed that there was in Egypt a tradition current that they were a Chosen Race under God, and that the Land of Canaan was their rightful heritage, wrongfully held by the Canaanites; but this did not prevent their holding at the same time to their natural religion, making their God local to the land where they dwelt.

Nemesis or Providence.

The existence of a Nemesis in one form or another seems to pervade the minds of all mankind, whether of old or at the present day. Probably Nemesis was originally the local god in his early form, and was a beneficent character like our present notion of Providence. But through the wiliness of man the character of Nemesis has profoundly deteriorated amongst primitive tribes at the present day, and at the hands of wizards and sorcerers the lives of savages are rendered miserable.

With the early Greeks, Nemesis was the personification of justice (moral and divine), and was the distributor of fortune, good and bad, and she seems to differ very slightly from Providence. Whether as beneficent or malignant, Nemesis is found over all the world, and brings the punishments that are to be meted out for offences against the moral law planted in the breasts of people.

Owing to the power of Nemesis, there is as much law and order in the desert as there is in the most civilized states of Europe, but you must know the customs of the people to be able to find it.

I give some instances of the power of Nemesis :—

Whilst investigating the circumstances of the murder of Professor Palmer, I was able to make use of Bedouin customs. I knew that if a Bedouin, under examination, once stated the truth, he could not again depart from it ; and consequently when in reply to a question he said " I have said," it was a sign that it was the truth he had spoken. I then marked all the passages where he would give only one reply, and by putting all these answers together I arrived at a narrative of the circumstances of the murder, and eventually at the confession of the principal murderers. When the murderers were arrested and tried, having once admitted their guilt, they could not swerve from it, and to the surprise of the Turkish (Egyptian) Court, which tried them, they all confessed their guilt and were executed.

A few years after this, about 1887, when Commissioner of Police for London, I was in Ireland for a holiday, and staying on the Lake of Killarney. I received a mysterious message requesting me to go across the lake to interview some persons who were wishful to talk to me about the murder of Professor Palmer. I was strongly advised not to assent, but the ayes had it, because I was impressed with the idea that Arab laws of hospitality to strangers would hold good in Ireland, if I followed them out ; and I committed myself to the care of an Unseen

Hand and was rowed across the lake, and taken up to a barn above the lake, where I found some twenty to twenty-five men assembled. After a cordial greeting, the spokesman told me that they had heard of my success in unravelling the intricacies of the Palmer murder, and they wished to ascertain if the same methods would be successful in Ireland. I said that I was quite willing to give them any information on the subject, but that as I was a stranger in their country they must first carry out the ancient customs of Ireland, and give me food, and eat with me. They quite jumped to this idea, and we had a hasty meal of what they had on the premises, and some good whisky.

They then proceeded to question me on the methods which I had adopted; and when they found that it was owing to my knowledge of Bedouin customs and laws of hospitality, which had enabled me to bring the murderers to justice, they said the system would be of no use in Ireland, because there were no traditional usages prevalent amongst them of so binding a nature as to afford evidence of a man's guilt in a court of law, and their laws of hospitality might not be relied upon in all circumstances to afford protection to the stranger. To this I entirely demurred, as in that case they would not be bound to give me a safe escort back across the lake. I asserted that in my case they were bound by old tribal laws which they dare not break, for fear of the enmity of some Unknown Power. They did not deny this, and we parted in amity.

The domination of the human mind by a Nemesis forces some persons to speak the truth. When I was in Singapore in 1893, amongst my servants, of many nationalities, there was one incapable of telling a lie, and his value as a servant was not as a worker but as a truth-teller. When a difficulty occurred amongst the servants, and the truth was not in them, I had only to say I shall ask Tola, and they would say, "Then we must tell you all about it."

Now these men took no exception to the truth-teller; they had no animosity against him for always upsetting their machinations, recognizing that he was acting under a higher power.

At first I could not understand why Tola was a truth-teller, as in other matters he did not particularly shine as a Christian, but subsequently I came to the conclusion that he was better versed in natural religion than as a Christian, and that on his primitive side he was a law unto himself. I think that this was recognized by the other servants, who were Buddhists, Hindoos, Moslem, and what not, who would not have submitted

so readily to a Christian marplot. If one attempts to go back into the past beyond the local gods, or Baalim, one is met with proposals of animism and other links in the development of religion in the changes from the savage to the civilized state; but my impression is that, in the Semitic races and in the old Eastern civilizations of Asia, the natural religion belongs to people who have once known the true God, and that they have joined together the service of God and devils. I therefore look upon these old heathen customs which make for good, as being old duties to God run wild.

The Land and the Covenant.

The geography of Palestine has at all times been intimately connected with the history of Israel, and cannot be separated from it.

The Land of Canaan is still held by Israel under a contract which cannot be broken, an everlasting Covenant between Jehovah and the seed of Abraham: "and I will be their God . . . Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my Covenant . . . Every man child among you shall be circumcised" (Gen. xvii, 8-10).

This Covenant is still in operation, the Deeds are intact, but the land is withheld from the heritors because, though the outward sign of the Covenant has in a great measure been faithfully kept, the spiritual grace has been lacking. But the world is looking forward to the completion of the Covenant in the near future.

This Covenant has been developed and expanded in detail as history has progressed, but its substance has not been altered; the God of the whole earth is still the God of Abraham and His seed for ever, and the Covenant has still to be fulfilled in its entirety, and the Promised Land has to be occupied by Israel.

We on our parts have a part to perform. If we are to do our duty in assisting Israel, we must learn to comprehend more fully their ancient history, and must attune our minds to the conditions under which the people lived in those early days. "Unless we can look upon ancient customs with the eyes of the ancients, unless we can transport ourselves in the spirit to other lands and other times, and sun ourselves in the clear light of bygone days, all our conceptions of what has been done by the men who have long ceased to be must be dim, uncertain, and unsatisfactory, and all our reproductions as soulless and

uninstructive as the scattered fragments of a broken statue" (Niebuhr, *Kleine Schaften*, p. 92).

In thinking over early days, two leading ideas are dominant. The people who lived in those days, whether followers of God or of Baal, lived more in the presence of God than we do in Europe at the present day; God, or God's substitute, was everywhere and in everything. The second idea is that the high value set upon human life amongst European Christians of to-day is entirely a value set up in recent times owing to abnormal security in life and property, and does not exist now in the East; and was unknown in early days, or even, in a measure, a hundred years ago; and at the present time, under stress of circumstances, it is rapidly dwindling away.

At the present day in China we may meet with a Chinaman who for £10 will substitute himself for a felon condemned to death, ruling that his life is a fair sacrifice for the welfare of his family, to whom the £10 will be handed over.

It is less than a hundred years ago that our countrymen in England were hanged for offences which are now treated much more leniently. Unless the value set on life is reduced in due proportion to that of honour and duty, it is impossible to read the sentences passed on the inhabitants of Canaan without some kind of shock to our feelings. The utter extermination of every creature that breathed in Canaan, men, women, children, cattle and herds, cannot fail to strike us as a very difficult task to be allotted to a God-fearing people. With our views of to-day it would seem that it could only be carried out effectually by a people nearly perfect, or else by a people in the same condition as the Canaanites themselves. In those days the god of each tribe was part of the tribe, and local to the land; so that, short of joining with them in their idolatry, their extermination was a necessity, yet as the bulk of Israel could see very little difference between the two religions, there could be no real enthusiasm in exterminating the people so completely.

There was one matter, however, in which the Israelites must have noticed a marked difference between the two religions, and which probably influenced them greatly.

During their Personal guidance they were brought to realize that their God punished them for disobedience as severely as He punished the heathen. This must have given Jehovah, in their eyes, a distinct position, as apart from the position of the gods of the surrounding nations, who were assumed to wink at the transgressions of their followers.

The man found picking up sticks on the Sabbath day was

brought before Moses by divine command and stoned to death (Num. xv, 32-36).

The rebellious Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed in an earthquake for their contumacy, and of the congregation that murmured in the matter of Korah, no less than 14,700 died of the plague (Num. xvi, 49).

The Israelites as the Chosen Race had to take the bitter and the sweet together, and if they were to expect the help of the Almighty they must be prepared for strenuous and uncongenial work and rigid punishments for disobedience—all in this life.

We may ask ourselves, then, what was the driving power that impelled them? Was it training, or habit, or fear, or religious awe?

The view in the Pentateuch, attributed to the Almighty, is that they were a stiff-necked, backsliding people, but would not this be the character of all races?

For the benefit of mankind a small portion of the ruling of the universe has been unveiled, and we are permitted to see in the Pentateuch how the Almighty dealt with the Chosen Race, making it His instrument for chastising other races. We do not know but that this may not be the constant method of the Almighty; and in all our doings as a nation we may be acting under direct interposition of Providence, with the same stiff necks as Israel of old. Israel was threatened with the sword without and terror within, if God's Will was not done; but some greater force than this must have kept the people in the right way so often.

I take it that the people actually were impressed with the desire to serve God, and were attracted by the Majesty of the Almighty, and during a great part of their lives gave a willing service to God. If we can take an impartial view of Israel at work, we must realize that they were given a task beyond their powers, because it was necessary that they should recognize that they were agents of the Almighty and not fighting only for themselves.

As we know them after their forty years in the desert, we may say that with such stuff and a year's training we should be glad to welcome the whole 600,000 of them as our allies at the present day.

Training—the Exodus.

The account given in the Pentateuch of the Exodus is the most remarkable lesson recorded in history of the effect of training on a nation, changing it in a few months from a rabble

of discontented slaves into an organized army of warriors. This was done under the enormous pressure of dire necessity, but on the other hand it was carried out in spite of the inclinations of a large section of the people, especially the older ones, whose enervated habits led them to hunger after the flesh-pots of Egypt. The enfeebled Israelites, after generations of abject slavery under the iron rule of the Pharaohs, had been reduced to the lowest depths of serfdom and submission to their human rulers, but to God they only turned at rare intervals.

Even the destruction of all their male children by Pharaoh was not enough to stir them up to active resistance, and it was necessary that a leader from amongst themselves should be trained up as a free man in the royal household of Pharaoh of Egypt.

This leader was Moses, the younger of the children of Amram, a highly gifted family; Miriam and Aaron possessing the prophetic gifts, and Moses being potentially gifted with the ability to become versed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and to take his place as a personage of influence in the royal household. These three were chosen to act as ambassadors of the Almighty, to release their brethren from the thralldom of the Egyptians, and to train them to fight against and exterminate the possessors of Canaan. Their task was to control and educate a nation, now physically and mentally unfit—to do more than murmur and groan under the lash of the taskmasters—and whose thoughts could not rise above the contemplation of the flesh-pots of Egypt; and, further, to change them into an army of conquerors.

At the present crisis in our history the lesson as to how this change was brought about cannot fail to be of interest to us all.

The method of procedure adopted in educating the Israelites to carry out their task of conquest was all planned out beforehand by the Almighty, as we are permitted to know, from the instructions given to Moses at Horeb, where he was watching the flocks of Jethro the Midianite (Ex. iii, 12): "When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." And again (Ex. xiii, 17): "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea."

There were in ancient times two roads leading from Egypt into Southern Palestine: (1) The way of the land of the

Philistines, leading northward from Goshen to the sea shore, and thence along the coast by Al Arish and Gaza; and (2) the way of Shur, leading due east from Goshen and thence into the south country towards Beer Sheba. In either of these cases, as the crow flies, the distance across the desert was not more than sixty miles, and with depôts for food and water in time of peace the multitude could have accomplished the journey, at the vernal equinox, when there is water and herbage, in six days' journey of ten miles each. But with a hostile force in front in Palestine, and a hostile force behind in Egypt, they would have to leave their women, children, and old men and herds on the confines of Egypt, under guard of one army, whilst another army crossed the desert to attack the giant Sons of Anak of Southern Palestine, with the certainty that they must either conquer them or suffer a very disastrous defeat. Such a proceeding could only be attempted with any chance of success by an experienced army of trained soldiers, and was an absolute impossibility for the Israelites of that period, without organization, weapons, and skill in fighting, without warlike spirit, enthusiasm, and powers of endurance, without a single trait in their character which goes to make a fighting man, and apparently with a desire at the bottom of their hearts to avoid the perils of the desert and to return to their life of slavery in Egypt. For people in such a plight there was only one possible solution of the difficulty, namely, the destruction of Pharaoh's host and a sojourn in the Sinai peninsula till they were organized, armed, and skilled in fighting; and there was also to be induced in them a martial ardour sufficient to carry them over the discomforts and perils of active military operations.

The term wilderness in the Bible does not mean a desert where there is no vegetation or food for man or beast, and the Wilderness of the Wanderings about Sinai at the present time supports a large population of Bedouin with their flocks, and bears evidence on its surface of having, at a remote period, been far more fertile than it is at present; but it is certain that at no time in its history could it have supported the vast influx of Israelites and their followers, numbering at least 3,000,000 human beings, with herds and flocks.

We do not read in the Bible of the people subsisting on any other food but manna and occasionally quails, any more than we read of what the cattle and sheep subsisted on, but we may take it that all the food growing in the wilderness for man and beast was duly consumed, and that the milk of the flocks was not wasted. The song of Moses implies this. No doubt they

had many acres under the plough, as have the Bedouin at present, and had both wheat and barley, but not sufficient for their vast multitudes.

In the year 1883, when in the desert, east of Suez, I climbed up a mountain to get a view, and on the flat top I found ploughing going on by slaves in the employ of a Bedouin tribe, and though little rain ever falls on this part, yet there was no lack of water for irrigation, as the humid wind from the Red Sea struck against the side of the mountain, and being driven upwards was forced to deposit its moisture on the land in the form of vapour or mist. It was an exemplification of what is stated to have taken place in another part of Arabia: "There went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground." We may assume that there was food in the desert, but not enough, and the manna was required to eke it out.

Now, the scheme was first to destroy Pharaoh's army so completely that it would take a long time to organize another adequate force, and in the meantime to bring the Israelites into the Sinai Wilderness and rapidly train them into fighting men, but little by little, so as not to frighten them at their task and drive them back into Egypt. This scheme was not divulged to the people at first, and all that Moses let out to them and Pharaoh was that they would go three days' journey into the wilderness to sacrifice there. It was not until the die was cast and the people had spoiled the Egyptians, and were sensibly under the immediate protection of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, that they were entrusted with the information that they were on their way to the Promised Land, on a mission of exterminating the Canaanites: and the night of the Passover was to be a memorial to them (Ex. xviii). At this time they had advanced as far as Etham, on the verge of the desert, north-west of the Bitter Lakes. The events of the last days in Egypt appear to have rendered the Israelites docile for a while, and when the order came to them to turn about again and move towards Egypt, to a most hazardous position on the inner side of the Bitter Lakes, they obeyed without a murmur. Pharaoh at once grasped the situation, and saw that there was, humanly speaking, no escape for Israel, and that they were in his power. He exclaimed, "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in." Thus was the strategy accomplished for the destruction of Pharaoh's host. Israel, enclosed between Egypt and the sea, was a bait too tempting for Pharaoh to resist. And he made ready his chariots and took his people with him—all the chariots of Egypt. And a passage was

opened across the sea for the Israelites, and they passed over dry-shod, but the Egyptians following after were overthrown in the midst of the sea, chariots and horsemen.

The Israelites were now free to move at leisure, and Moses led them south by the shore of the Red Sea into the Wilderness of the Wanderings about Sinai to the foot of the Holy Mountain. They were now put into training for the simple life which was to fit them for their work of conquest.

But the people, now that the danger from Pharaoh was eliminated, became dissatisfied with their lot, and rather than undergo the hardships of training they recalled the flesh-pots of Egypt, and said that they would rather have died in Egypt. Then the Lord rained manna from heaven, and also sent them quails. We have no idea at the present day what kind of food manna was, but the descent of the quails, as described, is a complete account of what takes place in the desert at the present day: with certain winds they descend on the desert near the Suez Canal and are captured in numbers by the Canal warders, who put out bottles with the bottoms knocked out, into which the birds creep in the heat of the day, and are thus captured. Quails are a delicacy when eaten sparingly, but you soon get fed up with them in the desert.

After the second month of their wanderings the Israelites had fully entered into their training: (1) They led the simple life with their limited amount of food, eked out by manna. (2) They supplied themselves with warlike implements, and learnt how to use them and how to drill, and fought successfully against the Amalekites. (3) Whilst resting at the foot of Sinai, they were organized in their thousands and hundreds under military judges and leaders, and the law was promulgated, and they were made subject to it.

How far there was any previous organization we do not know, but it seems clear that in Egypt they must have had an organization for the performance of their daily tasks. The Egyptians, we know from their monuments, were highly organized, horse, foot and chariots, but as they were jealous of the growing numbers of Israel, they may have restricted their organization to reduce their power of rebellion. After training for little over one year, the Israelites were considered fit as to their military organization, and were sent up from Sinai on their way to the conquest of the Land of Canaan (Deut. ix, 23). They were told: "Go up and possess the land which I have given you," and they marched direct on Kadesh Barnea. Bewildered with the reports of the spies, they refused to go on to conquest, having

no faith in themselves or in the Lord's arm, and then when told to go back they rebelliously went forward and were punished by the Amalekites. The whole position seems clear. Their training was complete. Physically they were fit; mentally they were untrained; and they were sentenced to remain for forty years in the wilderness until all the generation that had done evil was consumed.

This decision gives us much cause for reflection; one year for training of the body, forty years for training of the mind, when the heart is not in the matter. Now the question must present itself to us, "Was it possible for the Israelites to be stirred up to this war of conquest so as to have their hearts in the matter?" It seems to me that you can only fight with enthusiasm if you feel a strong consciousness and indignation at the perpetration of wrong and injustice on the part of your enemies, or else if you form part of a great army established for conquest. As neither of these applied to the Israelites, they had to fall back until their children were educated up to the mark. The reason why Israel did not respond to the call of the Almighty is well explained in Robertson Smith's account of the religion of the Semites. Israel was only in a degree better prepared than the surrounding heathen to accept a God of righteousness, and the bulk of the people saw very little difference between their religion and that of their heathen neighbours. The bulk of them did not look upon the God of Israel as the God of the whole earth, and did not recognize that all other gods were as nothing.

Israel in Canaan,

Forty years had now passed away, and Israel was on the way to the conquest of Canaan. But not the same Israel that jibbed on facing the defenders of Southern Palestine. The memory of the flesh-pots of Egypt was now merely a survival; every fighting man was now a trained soldier from his youth, and the habit of obedience outwardly to God's commands, received through their leader, had been inculcated. The Israelites were embarked on the first Jihad, or Holy War, waged in the name of the Almighty. We have some knowledge of such wars in recent times waged by Mahomet and his successors, and we know how they stirred and animated the Semitic races, and indeed all races who attached themselves to the Moslem religion. There was, however, a vast gulf between the two classes of Jihad. In the case of Israel, it was a Jihad of extermination of all living creatures in the land, men, women, children, and animals:

nothing could be spared that fire would destroy. Israel was to commence with a new sheet. With the Moslem successful Jihads, the terms were essentially different. It was merely the destruction of idolatry in the country. If the idolatrous inhabitants were not submissive they were to be destroyed, but if they submitted they had two alternatives, either to embrace the Moslem faith, or to pay a capitation tax. The comparison between the Moslem and Israelite Jihads cannot be carried very far because of the rise of Judaism and Christianity in the meantime. It is apparent, however, that whilst that of the Moslems was congenial to the instincts of the people, that of the Israelites could never be acceptable, even if the people were wholly devoted to the service of God, and could only be carried out as a pained duty imposed by the Almighty.

We may consider, then, why this duty (bound to fail) was imposed upon Israel. I may suggest that it was a test similar to that imposed upon Abraham in regard to his son Isaac. It was to be on record that Israel could not be trained as a perfect people, even when set apart in the desert under the most favourable circumstances, and that a Redeemer was required after they had passed through a few more vicissitudes.

I can see no difficulty in the Israelites killing the Pagan races when once they were domiciled in Canaan, and were attacked by them in their homes, but to wage a war of extermination against people living quietly under their gods, without having given offence, seems to me contrary to the instincts of the people unless ordered to do so by a higher power.

It seems, therefore, that we want a new conception of these people of Israel. Instead of looking on them as a nation of backsliders we ought to see in them a people who were set a task only possible for a perfect people, and that probably what they did do would stand very high by the side of the exploits of any other nation. Here we must draw the line between the individual and a nation. The former may do what the latter cannot.

David in his combat with Goliath relied on three sources of strength: (1) His expertness in the art of war. (2) His confidence in the righteousness of his cause. (3) His trust in the help of the Almighty. Now, in taking the nation as a whole, I do not think it probable that the bulk of the people could fully rely on more than their expertness as soldiers. The righteousness of their cause could only appeal to them, in this act of aggression, in proportion as they had detached themselves from the current Semitic view, and accepted the ruling of the Almighty as their only guide.

WHAT THE WORLD OWES TO THE CHOSEN RACE.

We are so apt only to dwell on the failure of the Chosen Race to act up to the high standard allotted to them, that we are not inclined to recognize the enormous benefits we have derived from the position they maintained in the world as a bulwark on the side of the freedom of mankind.

So far as the physical effects of Palestine are concerned, I do not think that they can have had any appreciable effect on the mind or actions of the people, beyond influencing the imagery used in their writings.

I take it that if the lot of the Chosen People had been cast in Holland or Switzerland, the sentiments expressed in the Psalms would have been the same, but the imagery used would have been tempered by the physical features of the surroundings.

We must, then, look upon the Chosen Race as having been entirely responsible for bringing down to us what has been entrusted to them. It seems to be admitted that the capacity of man, morally and intellectually, has not increased since the beginning of history, but his moral knowledge has had several additions by revelation; and the Chosen Race has been the vehicle by which they have been brought down to us. I mention the following:—

- (1) Personal purity.
- (2) Love to God and mankind.
- (3) The importance of the freedom of man, physically and intellectually.

On the other hand, man has advanced on his own account in civilization, and amongst his assets are the following:—

- (1) Wealth: fertility of the land, buildings, works derived from former generations.
- (2) Experience handed down.
- (3) Economy of time and labour in use of machinery and by means of water and steam power and electricity.
- (4) Increased accuracy of work owing to improved tools and the study and application of the natural sciences.

Then the question arises, "Does civilization with natural religion alone make for the benefit of mankind? How does it compare with the new culture impressed on the Israelites at Sinai?"

Civilization, as defined by Guizot, is the development of mankind socially and morally. From this arises the question, "Is

the individual to serve society, or is society to serve the individual?" Under the civilization of the ancients (Babylonians, Assyrians, and Egyptians), society was everything and man was nothing. But under the Hebrew dispensation society was made for man. We find, then, at Sinai, a rival system was set up in the world, which if carried out in accordance with the will of God, was to control civilization, and secure the freedom of man mentally and physically, through the example of the Chosen People.

But from their actions the world learnt that even under the most favourable circumstances "man is not able of his own natural strength to do works pleasant and acceptable to God," and they failed utterly. But yet for fifteen centuries the sceptre did not depart from Judah until Shiloh came, and completed the freedom of mankind.

During all these centuries Israel kept the flag flying, and can never have been wholly unrepentant, and put a brave face on it up till the last. During those fifteen centuries, and on to the present day, the Hebrews have been a sign to the Gentiles of the Covenant made on Sinai.

This Covenant has yet to be fulfilled, and we have still to learn the effect which the physical features of Palestine will have in the important part that country is to play in the near future.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN : We have listened this evening to a very graphic lecture. Sir Charles Warren has brought home to us the reality of the conditions through which the Israelites passed, and we have learnt to understand something of the necessity for the training which they underwent. One little phrase that is often applied in the Scriptures to the Israelites shows, I think, the kind of change that took place when they were being developed from the slaves that they had been in Egypt to the free men that they became in the desert and in Palestine. They are spoken of as "stiff-necked." That is just the characteristic of a race which has been given freedom, but has not attained to the character which would enable them to use it aright. God desires men to be free, but He also desires that they should exercise their freedom in willing obedience. Yet although the nation as a whole was stiff-necked and rebellious, there was always a faithful remnant, and through them the Lord gave us the inestimable gift of the Holy Scriptures.

Lieut.-Colonel MACKINLAY : I feel sure I speak for all members of the Institute when I express our grateful thanks for the excellent paper which Sir Charles Warren has given us ; it is particularly interesting to us during this time of war.

On pages 185 and 186 he tells us of roads from Egypt to Palestine. May I ask what was the probable route of the Magi just after the Nativity, supposing they came from Babylon ? Was there a route, say, down the Valley of the Jabbok, coming more directly to Jerusalem, than the road through Damascus ? What were the means of crossing the Jordan ? Were there any bridges in Bible times ? How many fords are there in the part between the Lake of Galilee and the Dead Sea ? Are these fords impassable during the annual overflow ? If so, for about how long ? Do caravans cross the Syrian desert at all seasons of the year, or do they stop during the hot weather ?

Referring to page 177 of the paper, there can be no doubt that the star Smayeh, seen in September, 1882, to be approaching the Moon, was the planet Venus. It is known from the *Nautical Almanac*, 1882, that Venus was at its nearest to the Moon ($1^{\circ} 48'$ distant) on the 16th September in that year. As the planet was then very brilliant, this near approach would certainly attract attention. Had Jupiter been in a like position it would also have been noticeable, but it was distant from the Moon at that time, and no fixed star is sufficiently bright to call for general remark under similar conditions.

Sir Charles tells us that Smayeh is the star within the crescent in the Turkish ensign. This device is not to be found in other Mohammedan countries, but it was adopted by the Turks when they took Constantinople. It had previously been the symbol of that city for many hundreds of years, the crescent and the star appearing in the coinage of Byzantium ; the crescent (*crescens*) of the waxing Moon indicating increasing light, and the planet, as Morning Star, heralding the rising of the Sun—both inspiring ideas. The Byzantines, in their turn, had adopted these symbols from the Babylonians.

In the British Museum are Babylonian boundary stones with figures of the Sun, Moon, and Istar (the planet Venus) cut on them. It is noteworthy that the Moon is represented by a crescent, and that Istar is made as large as the chief luminaries, thus shewing

the great importance which was attached to her. The curses of these three divinities are also inscribed on the stones against anyone who should move them. It thus appears that superstitious belief in the power of Smaiyeh in 1882 protected the cairn, in just the same way as a similar belief in the same star, then called Istar, had protected the boundaries of the Babylonian farmers of thousands of years ago.

Dr. WITHERS GREEN: I should like to ask a simple question. What is the geography of Palestine? Is the River of Egypt the southern boundary of the land of Palestine? Then the question arises: What is the River of Egypt? I asked a friend and he said the Nile. It seems to me that the River of Egypt was the little wadi, or rivulet dividing the land of Palestine from the land of Egypt. That seems to me likely to be so because, in *Isai. xix*, Egypt, Palestine, and Assyria are spoken of as distinct countries. If you take the Nile to be the southern boundary of the promised portion of Palestine, you are really going into Egypt. If one asks an ordinary Christian what is the River of Egypt, he generally replies, The Nile. But I fancy that is wrong.

Colonel ALVES: I will ask a question or two, and make a remark or two. The first question is: When, through Abraham, Israel was chosen to be the race to bear witness that Jehovah was the all-powerful and only true God of the whole earth, from Whom should spring the Life-giver and Deliverer from sin, why was Palestine specially chosen for that nation? For of that country the spies said: "A land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof." Secondly, what is the nature of its strategic importance in the present day, seeing that the greatest trouble is to fall on the Jews when settled in this land as a nation—a thing impossible without the consent of the Gentile powers? Thirdly, what was likely to be the effect of the presence of the mixed multitude in inciting the Israelites to rebellion?

As to training (page 170), the Kaffir may display brilliant intellectual qualities, but will he make the use of them that a white man will? Our Lord and Peter (see *John vii*, 17, and *II Peter i*, 5-7) put the attitude of doing before that of knowing. Here, with all respect to the reader of the paper, unless it is simply a matter of terminology, I must differ from him on one or two points. On page 185, line 25,

Israel, on leaving Canaan, is described as "now physically and mentally unfit"; and on page 189, lines 4, 5, "Physically they were fit; mentally they were untrained," after a year's discipline in the wilderness. In the first of these cases their bodies were all right: "there was not one feeble person among their tribes." Moreover, less than two months after leaving Egypt, they put up a good fight with Amalek. Physically, therefore, they were all right though mentally they were unequipped.

In the second case, after a year's training, they were right mentally, for the mind is physical and not spiritual—I mean in the sense that men and beasts are all sharers of the same spirit (see Genesis vii, 21-22). Apart from the spirit the mind cannot think, but neither can the body move. When we read of all the wonderful ways in which Jehovah had shown His mastery over the gods of Egypt, and of His miraculous care and protection during the first two months of the wanderings, the only conclusion at which I can arrive is that the moral and spiritual elements alone were at fault, and that ancient Israel must be awarded the palm for perversity. I find no difficulty in the command to exterminate certain races. When depravity is in the very bones, it is the most merciful thing to do. Why, in some cases, cattle were also to be destroyed, and in others virgins alone amongst humanity were to be preserved alive, is at present somewhat of a mystery which, when solved, may prove to be the clue to important truth.

Dr. SCHOFIELD: May I be allowed to suggest an additional explanation to Sir Charles Warren's solution on page 190, that the duty of destroying nations in this extraordinary way may be a test similar to that imposed by Abraham on his son Isaac. I should like to suggest that there is a very sinister reason beyond that which is hinted at in Genesis vi, where it says: "There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that." To my mind this is a reference to the race of Anak, and the special reason for the extraordinary command to exterminate this particular race was to carry out the word: "I will destroy man, because he has corrupted his way on the earth." That is to say, the preservation of the clean race in a pure state was dependent upon the destruction of the unclean in a defiled state. That, I think, is the possible clue to the extraordinary commands given with regard to the nations of Canaan.

MR. SIDNEY COLLETT: Towards the foot of page 179, Sir Charles Warren suggests, in the form of a question, the extent to which the Israelites were given up to the gods of Egypt. I have always felt that we might safely conclude that they were largely addicted to idolatry. The proof of that seems to be the readiness with which the people made the golden calf and worshipped it. What strikes me in this paper, with all its profound interest, is that too much stress has been laid on the human element. We read much about the training of the Israelites and their military fitness, but surely the predominant thing in connection with the whole subject, from the Scriptural point of view, is the power of God—the miraculous. Everything was miraculous: nothing depended on the natural. It seems to me, we shall never arrive at a wise and correct conclusion on these matters unless we give God and His almighty power the right place in speaking of these things.

Then I notice that, on the last page (192), the lecturer says: "During all these centuries Israel kept the flag flying." I think we can scarcely say that. "This my covenant they broke," God said over and over again; and because they did not "keep the flag flying" they were disintegrated, and are now scattered all over the earth for the same reason.

REV. J. TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S.: When considering the mysterious commands given by God to the people, I think we must allow of remote purposes which we are not able to fathom. I have one example in my mind. We all remember the command given to Saul to exterminate the Amalekites. It seems a brutal thing to do. But what is the historic view? Consider the Book of Esther. What took place there? Amalek had a descendant, Haman, whose plot was the extermination of the whole of the Israelites—to blot out the line from which the Messiah was to come. In order that the plot might be frustrated, Esther did the work which should have been done by Saul. It had to be done, and as Saul did not do it, it was reserved for Esther in later times. How much folly might be avoided if all of us carried out a distasteful duty, for some purpose not known to us, but assuredly known to God!

MR. J. O. CORRIE, B.A., F.R.A.S.: There is certain subsidiary evidence in Mosaic legislation of the hold which Egyptian ideas had on the children of Israel. In the whole of the Pentateuch you do

not see any distinct mention of a future life, yet future life is bound up with the ideas of Egypt.

Colonel MACKINLAY: May I ask one question more? Have you ever seen the planet Venus shining in the day-time in Palestine?

Sir CHARLES WARREN: No, I have never seen it, nor have I heard of anyone who has seen it.

Rev. MARTIN ANSTEY, M.A.: Is it a fact with regard to the doctrine of immortality and the Old Testament, that the reason why it was not mentioned more precisely is because it is everywhere assumed, everywhere taken for granted, just as the pressure of the atmosphere is not felt by us because it is the same everywhere? It was assumed and taken for granted, and therefore not mentioned.

Colonel ALVES: I submit that this subject, though worthy of discussion, is not one that can be decided by mere assertion, or be conveniently debated in connection with another subject which is entirely different.

The CHAIRMAN, in reply to Dr. Withers Green, said he believed that there was general agreement that the present boundary of Egypt and Palestine, at El Arish, was intended by "the River of Egypt," and not the Nile. The Nile, of course, was the very centre of Egypt, and not its boundary. Egypt was the whole river-basin of the Nile, not merely its western bank.

General Sir CHARLES WARREN: My ears are not young enough to catch all the remarks that have been made. I can only answer a few of the questions. There are one or two rather interesting points. With regard to the fords of the Jordan. The valley of the Jordan is all volcanic, and there are lines, 10, 15, or 20 feet wide, running east and west, right across the Jordan. When the water is worked up, they are just below the surface. When the water goes down, there is mud, but level mud, and these trap-fords are just like hard roads. If you know where they are, and know the level of the Jordan, you can go across. There are about thirty or forty of these trap-fords, and there are five or six main passages across the Jordan.

With regard to the harvest, the harvest is at different times in Palestine. I think the harvest in the Jordan—the barley harvest

—is quite early. The water floods, I think, in February. It comes from the snow melting on Hermon, and descends with a rush. The water not only floods the Jordan, but floods the whole valley for about three miles. The valley is about three miles wide, and goes on gentle slopes. The flooded portion is sown with barley by the Bedouin people, and this comes up very early in the year. As you go higher, you have different times for different harvests. In Assam you have people coming down from the hills for the harvest in the lowlands and people from the lowlands going to the hills when the harvest is high up.

I suppose it is the same all over the world. Even in England we have a variation of two or three weeks in different parts. I do not remember any other particular points I can answer.

The Meeting returned a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer, and adjourned at 6 p.m.