

is not that the enlightened and liberal man gets an ampler and richer character, it is that he forfeits character altogether. It is not an abundant entrance into life which is the issue, but the sinking of an exhausted nature into hell. For creatures such as we are, in a world such as this, these, according to Jesus, are the alternatives. And they are alternatives. This is the philosophy of Puritanism, when enlightenment has said its last word : Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons ; ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. As surely as we would have Christ and the Atonement, the judgment and the mercy of God, the spirit of holiness and the hope of heaven remain real to us, so surely must we renounce the things which cast upon them all the shadow of unreality and neutralize in our life their redeeming power. There are such things. We have all known them. We have all loved them. We have all feared them. It is our Lord who says to us, Cut them off, for your life.

JAMES DENNEY.

### *FOLKLORE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.*

THE services of Dr. Frazer to Anthropology and Comparative Religion are so very remarkable that his contribution to the volume dedicated to Dr. Tylor<sup>1</sup> is likely to attract very general attention among Biblical students. The subject is not indeed a new one : owing to the Bible being more read than any other book, those who have studied the ways of primitive peoples have in general been ready to perceive parallels between its records and the practices with which they have become acquainted in the course of their investigations ; and, indeed, Dr. Orr complained in

<sup>1</sup> *Anthropological Essays* dedicated to E. B. Tylor, Oxford, 1907, pp. 100-176, "Folklore in the Old Testament," by J. G. Frazer.

a recent work that too much had been done in this field. The amount of savage practice found in the records of the Israelites was greater than *one* people could be expected to exhibit.

Certainly the introduction of folklore in comments on the Old Testament is, at times, more ingenious than convincing. Such is Winckler's remarkably interesting suggestion that the calamity which attended the rebuilding of Jericho (1 Kings xvi. 34) consisted in the builder sacrificing his eldest son at the commencement, and his youngest son at the termination of the operations. That this horrible practice was at one time in vogue is probably attested by excavations; but if it was in vogue, it is not easy to see how in this particular case it could have come to be regarded not as the voluntary act of the builder, but as a misfortune incurred by him through violating the command not to rebuild Jericho; whereas the older theory that the builder's loss of his sons was a misfortune that attracted attention and even led to the discovery of a prophecy appears far more natural.

The subject of human sacrifice in the Old Testament has been discussed by a German anthropologist, F. Maurer, in the geographical and anthropological magazine, *Globus*, for 1897 (vol. xci. 111), and the same writer has dealt with *Taboos* in that magazine for 1906 (vol. xc. 137). As this anthropologist finds the principle of human sacrifice in the practice of circumcision, in the exposure of the infant Moses, and in David's fasting for Bathsheba's child, it would seem that Dr. Orr's criticism has some justification. There are so many allusions to the matter in the Old Testament which are clear and unquestionable, that there is no occasion to look for it where it is not to be found. The most luminous passage dealing with the subject is, of course, Genesis xxii.; and for the interpretation of that chapter the materials

collected by Professor Murray in his recent *Rise of the Greek Epic* are of especial value.

One of the most striking of Dr. Frazer's comments is on a text in which traces of ancient folklore might reasonably be looked for—the speech of a woman—Abigail to David, in 1 Samuel xxv. 29. That the “bundle of life” to which she refers has reminded many of those fairy tales in which the souls of living people are lodged apart from their bodies, seems likely; but nothing so closely parallel to Abigail's expression has hitherto been adduced as the “bundles of *churinga*, flattened and elongated stones and sticks, which the Arunta and other tribes of Central Australia keep with the greatest care and secrecy in caves and crevices of rocks.” These objects represent the souls of the members of the tribe. They correspond wonderfully with those of which Abigail is thinking, because they are capable of being tied up tight (as was to be the case with David's), or flung away (which was to happen to those of his enemies). As in the latter case it is specified that the process is accomplished by means of a sling, the objects contained in the “bundle” or bag of life would appear to have been stones. The expression occurs nowhere else (for the re-translator of Eccclus. vi. 16, of course, gets it from the passage in 1 Samuel, and very erroneously substitutes it for a “drug of life”), and is probably characteristic of “women's talk,” which, in some Eastern languages, shows very marked peculiarities, and is likely to retain traces of discarded superstitions, or at least references to stories told to children, which ordinarily are traceable to old mythologies. In some such story this bag of life may have figured.

Dr. Frazer's first comment is on the mark of Cain, and consists of a highly interesting and valuable collection of cases in which marks are employed in connexion with homicides, for a variety of purposes and intents. This

“mark,” however, belongs to the Authorized Version; the Revised interprets more cautiously, “And the Lord appointed a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him”; to be quite exact, the second clause should run, “that he should not be smitten by any one who found him.” The text furnishes no means of settling whether a sign was wrought for Cain’s benefit—some miracle convincing him that he might with safety go into exile: or whether he was furnished with a mark indicating to those who met him that he was sacrosanct. The former interpretation is supported by many obvious parallels from early times to that of Zacharias in the Gospel of St. Luke; a divine promise is made, but the hearer requires a miracle to be wrought to convince him that the promise will be kept. Cain’s punishment is exile, for the land that has been polluted by “kindred blood” will bear no crop till the murderer has been ejected; but in a strange country a man has no rights, and is likely to be slain by the first person who meets him. How then can Cain have the courage to accept his doom and exile himself? A miracle is wrought and he is convinced. If this be the author’s thought, then Dr. Frazer’s illustrations, in spite of their great interest and value, will be off the point; except, indeed, those in which the belief that fratricide caused famine is paralleled from Greek mythology.

Supposing that a mark on Cain’s person be meant, perhaps the best illustration would be found in that necklace or garland of the plant *‘idâh*, which, according to the historian of Meccah, was worn by the Kuraish when they left the sacred territory, so as to secure immunity for their persons in strange lands: “Those who saw this badge said ‘These are Allah’s people,’ and would not attack them.” The badge would indicate that such an act would incur the wrath of Allah, and the text of Genesis suggests something

of the kind—if the mark was really on Cain. Dr. Frazer's examples refer mainly to marks worn by homicides, and two sets out of three to marks borne with the idea of preventing the *ghost* of the murdered man taking vengeance. If it was Abel's ghost which Cain feared, the difficulty that has been found in the absence of other inhabitants of the world vanishes.

In any case Dr. Frazer's discussion is a great advance on that of Stade, which is, perhaps, the most diffuse that has at present been written on the subject. Stade supposed that the purpose of the myth was to account for the nomad character of the Kenites, which Israel, in the agricultural stage, would regard as a curse. This, then, had been incurred by some crime—the murder of Abel. But the Kenites also (presumably) wore some mark, indicating that they were worshippers of Jehovah, and so sacrosanct. Of the existence of such a mark worn by the Kenites there is no evidence; and the ground whence Cain is banished is at one time represented by Stade as the land of Israel, which would bear the murderer no produce, though it would bear it to others; at another as the *sanctuary*, within which the murderer would be safe. It would seem clear that it could not be both.

Probably the interpretation of the narrative should start from the name *Nod*, which must have been the name of a real country, just as the names by which Paradise is located are real geographical names. And, indeed, *Nadd* is an Arabic place-name, said to mean originally either "hill" or "crag"; the geographers tell us of a place of this name in Yemen, where also they locate one called *Ḥanak*, which would agree with that built by Cain and called after his firstborn, whose name, too (*Ḥinâk*) is employed in Arabian nomenclature. All that is intended by these comparisons is to show that the names in the text are likely to have

belonged to real places. Just then as *Latium* was so called (in theological theory) because some one "hid" (*latuit*) there, so *Nod* or *Nadd* was so called because some one fled thither. From whom? From an avenger of blood, since he is the most natural cause for flight. How came Cain to shed blood? Here we shall scarcely be wrong in finding the clue to the answer in another etymology—*Kain*, from *kinné*, "to be jealous," which philologically stands on a par with that actually recorded in *Genesis*, from *káná*, "to acquire."

In the case of *Abel*, the Arabic sense of the root whence his name is derived, "to be bereaved," might seem to furnish an admirable etymological basis for his part of the narrative. This is rendered probable by the fact that *Cain*, too, is an Arabic name with a meaning (smith) preserved in the Biblical compounds, though neglected in the Biblical etymology. The Arabian tribes called after persons named *Cain* appear to have been numerous.<sup>1</sup> In *Abel's* case *Josephus* and the *Alexandrines* suspected an etymology from the Hebrew *ébbel*, "grief." The older the form of the narrative, the more fully are the etymologies likely to have been given. Where they are omitted, the commentator is in danger of finding the gist of the narration where it did not originally belong.

*Dr. Frazer's* third collection deals with the "heap" or cairn of stones raised by *Jacob* and *Laban* to commemorate their covenant (*Gen.* xxxi. 45). Here again a name plays a great part in the story. The name *Gilead* is derived from two words signifying "heap-witness," and the narrative explains how the heap arose and to what it witnessed. If we are to infer from its statement that *Gilead* was actually

<sup>1</sup> A story given in a book published quite recently (the *Amáli* of *Kāfi*, i. 143) gives us the name of a *Cainite*—*Mašád* b. *Madh'úr*, "Peak son of Frightened." The verb *nadda*, "to flee," occurs in this story.

called *Ygar Sahadûthâ* by the Syrians, the etymology would have strong grounds in its favour ; perhaps, however, that remarkable gloss need only be regarded as the Aramaic equivalent of the words which the etymology restores. Against the philological correctness of the etymology we have the fact that the equivalent of *Gilead* appears as an Arabic quadriliteral, which does not admit of the analysis "heap-witness," because the latter portion in the sense of "witness" is a late and distinctly Hebrew formation.

Whether the etymology be correct or not, it is of interest to know what ideas the writer would be likely to associate with a "heap-witness." The passage exhibits conflation of documents, in a marked degree, with narratives based on archaic variants in the *reading* of a proper name.<sup>1</sup> According to verse 52 the heap is symbolic of a frontier wall, which neither party was to cross with evil intent. It is scarcely, therefore, to be compared with the familiar stone-heap of Arabian paganism, which, according to M. Chauvin, was intended to preserve land from appropriation for a year's time. What is common to both is that the part stands for the whole : a fraction of a wall is built to represent a whole wall ; a fraction of a field is rendered unfit for cultivation, to indicate that a whole area is not to be used for that purpose.

Dr. Frazer's explanation is quite different. He lays stress on the fact that, according to the Authorized Version, Jacob and Laban "did eat there upon the heap," and finds the essence of the ceremony in their eating food upon the stones. His extraordinarily interesting collection of examples all illustrate the idea of stability and solidity connected with stones, on which people swear, and whose qualities they in some way imbibe. While the common meal is an attempt to establish a bond of unity between the two

<sup>1</sup> Mizpeh and Massobah.

covenanters, that bond is strengthened by absorbing into their system the solidity of the stones.

The only question which occurs to the reader is whether a *heap* formed of stones that were picked up (ver. 45) and flung (ver. 51) would serve as a convenient symbol of solidity and permanence. While the illustrations correspond remarkably with the passage in Joshua xxiv. 27, where a stone that has heard what has been said is deposited to bear eternal witness thereunto, their appropriateness to an improvised stone-heap seems questionable : a stone endures, but a heap of stones collapses. On the other hand they do suit that form of the narrative in which the contracting parts set up a *maṣṣēbhâh*, or stone monument. One might gather that the association of a heap with evidence (which is contained in the etymology) was not in itself usual from the fact that the narrative contains more than one suggestion with regard to the purpose of this heap. One suggestion is that it was to serve as a table ; another that it was to be a landmark.

In illustration of the narrative of Jacob's wrestling matter is brought by Dr. Frazer from the depths of paganism—stories of water-gods who can only appear at night, and who must be caught by some wile before they can be made to *foretell the future*. These last words are italicized because, though they are not in the text of Genesis, they are put into it by Josephus in his epitome : “ these things the phantom foretold to Jacob at his request ; for perceiving that the phantom was a messenger of God, he requested it to tell him what would be his fate.” Dr. Frazer suggests with evident justice that our present text has been much abridged, whence there is much in it that is hard to understand. What appears very clearly is that, as in the other cases, the etymologies form the centre of the narrative. The name Jabbok is probably identical with the Arabic

*yanbú'* or Yanbo, "a stream," or "spring"—a name which is still found in Arabia. From this by dialectic changes Jabbok originates, which to the author abridged in Genesis seems to mean "he strove." Who strove with whom? To this the answer is furnished by the name Israel, which seems to mean, "he overcame El in wrestling"—*yašra'íl*. The name Penuel is interpreted as meaning that Jacob on this occasion had seen El face to face: this seems sufficient to explain the mention of the detail of the dawn. But the refusal of the personage with whom Jacob wrestled to utter his name may also be etymological; for it would not be surprising to find that the word Penuel was also derived from *Pelóni*, a Semitic word for some one whose name is not mentioned whether known or not.

If this be so, and we have to do with a "historical geography" of Palestine, in which the etymology of the names plays a leading part, there is clearly some danger everywhere of assigning to folklore what really belongs to etymology. Just as above we should not be justified in inferring that heaps were witnesses, but that some account had to be given of a place called Heap-witness, so parallels from mythology are perhaps unsafe in a case where there is a name which apparently means "Wrestle-God" to be explained, accompanied by a river-name which sounds like "he strove."

The last comment is on "the keepers of the threshold," whose duty is identified by Dr. Frazer with that of officials at various Moslem and pagan courts, who had to see that no one stepped upon the threshold, a part of the house to which many superstitions attach. The difficulty is that in Zephaniah i. 9 punishment is threatened those who "leap over the threshold," which is apparently what these other officials compel people to do. Dr. Frazer alters the above rendering, which is that of the R.V., back to that of the A.V., "leap on the threshold," and charges the former with

error ; the R.V. appears, however, to be in accordance with the best Hebraists (e.g., Ewald and Hitzig, who both render *springt über die Schwelle*). And, indeed, the word "leap" or "jump" seems to render no other interpretation permissible ; for a leap is required in order to *clear* a threshold, but not in order to mount upon it. Hence the old commentators thought that the practice of the Philistines was purposely avoided by the pious Israelites, and that it was imitation of the practice which would bring punishment.

Certainly the Hebrew word for "threshold" (*mištân*), which appears to be derived from a root meaning "to try" or "to seduce," might seem to embody some ancient folklore, and there might be mythological reasons why a "place of trial or seduction" should in some way be evaded, as was done by those Arabs who would not enter their dwellings by the door. The name, however, may be interpreted more simply. A yet earlier meaning of the root is "to question," and "place of questioning" seems a natural and highly appropriate name for the "threshold." It is there that inquiries are made both as to the inmates of the house and the visitors. If, therefore, it could be shown that the threshold superstitions of other races had their parallels among the Hebrews, it would be reasonable to suppose that with the latter they had an etymological origin.

But does the passage of Zephaniah really deal with a perfectly harmless practice ? The persons who leap "upon" or "over" the threshold are said to fill their master's house with violence and deceit—more accurately, perhaps, robbery and fraud. Hence it has been conjectured that some thief's trick is the subject of the allusion ; and an Arabic writer has provided us with a collection of such tricks out of which some sort of parallel might be produced. He professes to have entered one of the Mosques of Baghdad,

where there were people admiring the roofing, and talking of the benefactions; and the end of their conversation led them to enumerate the tricks of the *chevaliers d'industrie*. These, which in any case might be difficult to follow, are made yet more so by the description being in rhymed prose, whence there is much that is uncertain in the explanation. In any case they include such methods as hypnotizing the victim, and what is called the confidence trick.

The trick in the list that most resembles "jumping over the threshold" is that of the man "who bursts in at the door in the guise of a guest, or enters the house in the form of a visitor."<sup>1</sup> His predatory intentions are apparently concealed under the disguise of familiarity, to be adopted in case he is observed. The *modus operandi* is not quite clear, any more than it is with most of the tricks enumerated: but "bursting in at the door," seems a fair analogue to "leaping over the threshold," and the two may have been done with the same intent.

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## THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

### IV.

#### THE CREDIBILITY OF THE WITNESS—THE BURIAL.

ONE of the most touching scenes in Goethe's *Faust* is where the heart-sick sceptic, about to drain the poison-goblet, is turned from his purpose by hearing the ringing of the Easter bells, and the choral hymns, proclaiming that the Lord is risen. "I hear your message," is his first comment, "but I have not faith. Miracle is faith's favourite child."<sup>2</sup> In this we hear the voice of to-day. But the sweet sounds,

<sup>1</sup> Hamadhâni, *Makâmahs*, ed. Beyrut, 1889, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> "Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind."