

ARTICLE VII.

REMARKS ON J. G. MUELLER'S DIE SEMITEN.

BY PROF. C. H. TOY, GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA.

THE apparently anomalous position of the Canaanites — speaking a language of the group called Shemitic, yet belonging, according to the Table in Gen. x., to the Hamitic family — has long furnished a problem to scholars. Various solutions have been offered. Accepting the threefold division of Gen. x. as, in general, founded on real ethnographic differences, some have supposed that the Canaanites were Shemites, others that they adopted the language of the Hebrews, and others still that the Hebrews adopted their language. In any case the essential identity of the Phoenician, Canaanitish, Hebrew, Arabic, Ethiopic, Syrian, and Assyrian tongues excites surprise and calls for explanation. Dr. Müller, of Basle, has offered an explanation in his recent work “Die Semiten,” which is an elaboration of views presented by him some years ago in his Article “Canaaniter,” in Herzog’s “Real-Encyclopädie.” He holds that the name “Shemite” means nothing but Hamitised Japhethite, and that what are called Shemitic languages are simply Hamitic languages spoken by Japhetic or Indo-European peoples. He supposes that in the period of national migrations (about B.C. 3000–2000) while a part of the Indo-Europeans remained in their native seats and retained their language, another part passed (in nomadic hordes) westward and northward into Hamitic lands, found there well-developed civilization and cultivated languages, which they adopted, and thus became externally Hamites, retaining, however, certain general religious conceptions which they had brought with them. The proof of this he finds in the ethnological, linguistic, and religious statements of the Hebrew Scriptures (especially Gen. x.), in

other ancient writings (Greek, Roman, Phenician, Egyptian), and in the linguistic relations themselves.

Professor Müller's argument is clear and simple, and he has brought together many interesting facts, and made some excellent remarks. Thus, he points out the confusion which exists in the use of the term "Shemitic," showing that some of the best scholars of modern times (as Lassen, Hitzig, Rénan) have employed it sometimes in a linguistic sense, as including all the peoples who spoke this class of languages, and sometimes in an ethnological sense, as including the peoples who are derived from Shem in the Table of Nations in Genesis. His defence of the historical trustworthiness of this Table, proof that its principle of division is an ethnographical one, and demonstration that the Canaanites did not take their language from the Hebrews, are in the main good. We think, however, that he has failed to establish his main proposition. Relying chiefly on resemblances in geographical names, he assumes, as thereby proved, the extraordinary linguistic fact that peoples speaking one family of languages, by adopting a second, have produced a third, differing very greatly in form and matter from both the others. For so remarkable a fact, we require more conclusive proof than Professor Müller has given.

The course of his argument is briefly this: He first locates the Hamitic peoples of the Table in Genesis, Cush in South-western Asia (Babylonians) and Africa (Ethiopians), Mizraim in Egypt, Canaan on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, and Put on its southern shore, and then endeavors to show that these all spoke languages of the class now called Shemitic. He then undertakes to trace all the Shemites of the Table to Indo-European lands: Elam to Persia, Asshur to Kurdistan, Arpakshad to Chaldea, Lud to Asia Minor, Aram to Armenia, and so concludes that they originally spoke Indo-European languages. Hence it follows that Shemites are simply Japhethites that have adopted Hamitic languages.

There are grave objections to both his premises — that the languages of the Hamites were simply Shemitic, and that

the homes of the Shemites were Indo-European, which we propose briefly to state.

First, however, one or two *prima facie* difficulties in the way of this theory may be mentioned.

Professor Müller relies greatly (and properly) on the trustworthiness of the Hebrew national consciousness to establish their ethnological diversity from the Canaanites. The record of the Table, he says, cannot be referred to national hatred, or to any other cause but the national memory of a fact. If this be so, how is it to be explained that the national consciousness preserved no trace of the original identity of the Hebrews and Japhethites? Not from lapse of time, for, according to Dr. Müller, the migrations of the Indo-European bodies occurred not long before Abraham's time, and were not old enough to grow dim.¹ Certainly, if we are to appeal to national memory, the Hebrews were as distinct in race from Japheth as from Ham.

There is another and still greater difficulty in the way of this theory. It is strange that different Indo-European tribes should have so utterly given up their speech as to preserve no trace of it in form and flexion, and scarcely a distinguishable resemblance in matter and roots, while at the same time they elaborated a set of dialects which point unmistakably to one parent tongue. No such occurrence can be found in historical times. Dr. Müller adduces as illustrations the Jews, the Slaves, and the Germans. But in all these cases the circumstances were different. The Jews adopted an Aramaic dialect very like their own language, after they had been a long time exiles in an Aramaic land, and when they were a small community in a region which was everywhere adopting the dialect. Afterwards they spoke

¹ The Table in Gen. x. is by many referred to Samuel; and Knobel (*Völkertafel d. Gen. Einl.*) sees no difficulty in supposing that its details may have been known to the East and to the Hebrews as early as B.C. 1100-1000. So far as the knowledge is concerned, Moses may have had it; but the Table was probably written in Canaan. Portions of it (vss. 9, 19, 21-32) seem to be older than Moses; and, in its present form, it may be the work of a contemporary of Joshua after the conquest, B.C. 1400.

Greek or Latin or Arabic, and now speak German, French, or English in the midst of much larger and controlling communities. The Slaves, who have been Grecized and Germanized, have been absorbed in Greek and German communities. The Romanization of the Germans in Southern Europe is more in point. But there are two striking differences between this linguistic revolution and that which Dr. Müller supposes to have taken place. In the first place, the Indo-European immigrants are supposed to have exterminated the old races, while the preservation of the conquered Romans was a main condition of the linguistic change in Italy, Gaul, and Spain. The Saxon invaders of Britain were unaffected in language by the civilized Celts whom they destroyed or drove to inaccessible mountains. In the second place, the Romance languages preserve a decided Germanic element, while in the Shemitic it is difficult to discover any connection with the Indo-European, and the comparisons which have any probability all refer to an original Indo-European tongue and an original Shemitic, which stood to one another in the relation of sisters.

On the other hand, the maintenance of their language by the Hebrews for more than four centuries of sojourn in populous and civilized Egypt, the disappearance of the tongue of the civilized Turanians¹ (Hamites?) who preceded the Shemitic Assyrians in Nineveh (Rawlinson, "Great Monarchies," vol. i.), the victory of the language of the Aryan invaders of India over the native Dravidian dialects, the continued existence of the Turanian-Hungarian in the middle of Europe, and the composite character of the English language seem to bear weightily against our author's theory. Nor is his main argument well supported by facts.

First, as to the homes of the Shemites of the Table, Elam, Asshur, Arpakshad, Lud, Aram. In determining their positions it must be borne in mind that the names are geographical, and that thus the same name may be applied to different

¹ This term is used, for lack of a better, to designate people whose languages are agglutinizing.

tribes living in the same region, as is evidently done in the Table (*Lud* is of Ham and of Shem, and so *Sheba* and *Asshur*). Thus the Hamite Cush spreads over the same region as the Shemite Arpakshad, and this statement supposes that the different families were geographically mingled; the same thing is suggested by the account in Gen. xiv. of Chedorlaomer and his allied or tributary kings. We need not be surprised, therefore, to find resemblances between names of peoples which may be in race and language widely separated.

Now, concerning Asshur, Arpakshad, and Aram there need be little doubt; they are clearly the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, and the Arameans or Syrians. And these are all Shemitic races; their languages closely resemble the Hebrew, and their after history is in accordance with this relation. The researches of Rawlinson, Schrader, and others have established the Shemitic character of the Assyrian and Babylonian languages beyond a doubt. Dr. Müller has further to adduce as proof of the Indo-European character of these peoples nothing but the resemblance between the names *Chaldee* and *Curd*, and *Aram* and *Armenia*; the Curds and Armenians being clearly Japhetic. But, to say nothing of the doubt as to the real affinity of these names, their resemblance would of itself, as above remarked, prove only geographical proximity, not race-relationship, and cannot be regarded as having much force against the testimony of historical and linguistic facts referred to above.

About Lud and Elam there is more obscurity. From the accounts of biblical and profane writers it is evident that Elam lay between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, and Strabo's account shows that in his time there were many different tribes living there. Although, then, the Japhetic Persians later occupied this region, it cannot thence be inferred that they were the original or the only inhabitants. They may have existed only as an insignificant tribe, and gradually encroached on the Shemitic territory. The comparison of *Elam* with *Iran* or *Eram* and *Arya* is at least

precarious. Of Lud no geographical statement is made in the Table, and naturally the Lydians of Asia Minor (a Japhetic people) have been thought of in connection with it. But this seems improbable from the geographical sequence of names in the Table. Looking at vs. 22 of Gen. x., we see that the enumeration begins east of the Tigris (Elam), then, passing westward, takes first the northern region between the two rivers (Asshur), and then the southern (Arpakshad), and proceeding to the west of the Euphrates, first names Lud, and then concludes with Aram. And as Aram lay immediately west of the Euphrates (and indeed partly between it and the Tigris), we should naturally expect to find Lud in this region. It is true the name is not found there in the way of direct mention; but Knobel's identification of Lud with the Arabic *Laud* and *Amlik* (the *Amalekites* of the Old Testament) is at least more probable than a reference to a people dwelling on the Mediterranean coast of Asia Minor. Or, a migration of these Shemitic Ludim to the west may be supposed, and a maintenance of the name by a people who afterwards were predominantly Indo-European. Taking into account the general geographical and historical fidelity of the Table in Genesis, and the exceeding improbability of Müller's theory, we may be satisfied with giving a probable or possible explanation of these names in order to set aside the necessity for that theory.

It appears, then, that the homes of Asshur, Arpakshad, and Aram were quite certainly not Indo-European, while for Lud and Elam there is no necessity for assuming Indo-European original localities, and no proof of such character.

The other part of Dr. Müller's argument relates to the languages of the Hamites, Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

These languages present no little difficulty. While those of Canaan and of one Cushite region (Ethiopia) are certainly Shemitic; the Egyptian presents a mixed character, partly Shemitic and partly of a lower type, and the Berber (supposing that to be Putish) departs still more widely from the Shemitic.

Various hypotheses have been offered for the combination

of these facts, none of which are satisfactory. Schwartze and Benfey suppose an original Hamitic-Shemitic group, from which the two families have developed themselves. Steintal assumes three Caucasian branches, Egyptian, Shemitic, and Sanskritic. Bunsen regards the Egyptian and Shemitic as identical. Ebers supposes that the Hamites probably lived in the Caucasus with the Shemites, and at a very early period (c. B.C. 5000 ?) passed southward through Arabia into Africa, where they mingled with the aboriginal inhabitants and adopted in part their language. And Müller holds that Indo-Europeans migrated into Hamitic lands, and, adopting Hamitic languages, became Shemites.

Thus much seems certain, that the various languages which clearly belong to the (linguistic) Shemitic family were once represented in a common home by a common ancestral or mother-language; and there can be little doubt that this common home was in the region of the Persian Gulf. This region is pointed to by the early history of the Hebrews and the traditions of the Phenicians. But it is almost impossible now to determine the ethnographical character of the stems who lived there together. Two ways of explaining the facts present themselves: 1) We may suppose that the united Hamites and Shemites spoke the same language; that the Egyptians went off at an early period of its development, when it had a more distinctly agglutinizing character, or were modified, as Ebers says, by an agglutinizing language; and that the Cushites and Canaanites remained longer, till the language had assumed its present shape, and then passed over to the west. The position of Put is so uncertain that a definite statement about a Putish language can hardly be made; or, 2) We may suppose that the Hamites, living in the midst of a controlling Shemitic community, adopted their language some more, others less, completely. Before, however, a conclusion can be reached on the question, two points must be settled more definitely than has yet been done. The first is: the relation of the Old Egyptian to the Shemitic group. For this purpose we need a thorough working up of the

Egyptian grammar and lexicon. It is not sufficient, as Bunsen and Brugsch have done, to point out resemblances in the forms of words, though it must be admitted that some of these are striking. We must have a more exact analysis of forms both in Egyptian and Hebrew, and a more precise statement of the words borrowed by either language from the other. There must be a thorough investigation of roots and of inflections. Some efforts in this direction have been made by Benfey, Sayce, Brugsch and others, but with not very clear results.

The second point to be settled is, the extent and character of the non-Shemitic element of which there are traces from the Persian Gulf through Arabia across the Red Sea into Eastern Africa. We have, first, the old Babylonian language, which Rawlinson calls Accadian, which, according to him and Schrader, is entirely distinct in lexicon and grammar from the Shemitic-Babylonian, and resembles most the Galla dialect in eastern Africa, and the Mahrah in Arabia. Following the coast of the Persian Gulf we find in South Arabia (Yemen) languages and customs offering so decided a contrast to those of the upper part of the peninsula as to suggest a difference of race. The language of the Himyaritic inscriptions, nearly resembling the Ghez, and the somewhat peculiar Mahrah dialect are Shemitic; but there are marks of the former existence of another race to be found in Owen by which these dialects may have been modified. Rénan characterizes the social and political constitution of Yemen as non-Shemitic, and Lassen finds so great a resemblance between this people and the non-Aryans of Malabar that he supposes a colonization of Arabia from India. So the statement of the Periplus that various languages were spoken in this part of the peninsula looks in the same direction. Crossing the Red Sea we meet with tribes between the coast and the Nile whose language is quite distinct from the Shemitic family, though not without points of resemblance to it. Professor Müller holds the non-Aryans of India to be Hamites, and connects them with Arabia, purposing thus to show the existence all over Asia

of primitive Hamitic civilization. But if this were so, it would be decidedly opposed to his view, since the conquering Aryans in India did not adopt the language of the more civilized conquered races. It may be also that in the Arabian peninsula the differences between the idioms of the north and the south may be explained in part by the presence or absence of an old Cushite race; and this would not agree with Dr. Müller's theory.

Thus there are traces of an ancient non-Shemitic race in the region embraced in the biblical Cush, with an established civilization, which, however, seems to have given way before Shemitic conquerors. How far the Egyptians and Canaanites were connected in language with this Cushite people has not been shown; Ebers assigns the other Hamite people of the Table, Put, to Arabia, therefore to this Cushite region. In any case there is no ground, from our present knowledge, for regarding the Egyptian as a composite language, like the English, for example, and we must look on its grammar as its own peculiarity, and not as borrowed from the aboriginal African tribes or from any other source; it may, of course, have borrowed words from Shemitic dialects, as Lauth supposes, though his comparisons (D. M. G. xxv. 4) are to be received with great caution.

This question, therefore — the mutual relation of the Hamitic and Shemitic peoples and languages — is not solved by Professor Müller's easy method. Aside from the *prima facie* difficulties of his hypothesis, he does not account for the difference between the Egyptian on the one hand and the Canaanitish-Hebrew and Ethiopic on the other. Similar objections might be urged to his hypothesis of the Indo-European origin of the Hyksos and Philistines; but a satisfactory statement of the question would take too much space.

As has been suggested, we need for the solution of these questions: 1) a more thorough working up of general or comparative Shemitic grammar, and a more scientific analysis of Shemitic roots; 2) a careful study of the African dialects in northeastern Africa, and a comparison of them with the

Coptic and Old Egyptian ; and, 3) a better acquaintance with the languages and peoples which existed in the earliest accessible time in the region stretching from the northern extremity of the Persian Gulf to the strait of Bab-el-mandeb. Meantime it is better to forbear giving a decided answer to the question of linguistic and ethnographic relationship.

NOTE. — Since the above was written, I have received the Article of Professor Schrader (in *Z. D. M. G.* xxvii. 3) on the "Origin of the Chaldeans and the primitive seat of the Shemites." Without undertaking to review the Article, I take the opportunity to make a remark on it. After showing that the Chaldeans of Xenophon have no connection with the true Chaldeans of Babylon, and that the latter were pure Shemites, he examines the linguistic and mythological relations of the Northern (Assyr.-Aram.-Canaanitish) and Southern (Arab.-Eth.) groups of Shemitic dialects ; and, concluding that the latter has retained more nearly the original forms of the parent-speech, thence infers that Arabia was the primitive seat of the Shemitic race, and that the Hebrews and Juktanidæ cannot have had a common ancestor Arpakshad. His linguistic argument is clear, and his linguistic conclusion — that the Arabic is nearer the original Shemitic tongue than any other dialect — may be accepted as altogether probable. But in respect to his ethnological inference it seems to me that caution is necessary. The linguistic priority of the Arabic does not prove Arabia to be the primitive home of Shemitism any more than the similar priority of Sanskrit among Indo-European languages proves India to be the primitive home of the Indo-European race. The facts in the case may be just as satisfactorily accounted for by supposing a migration of the several divisions of the Shemitic family from a common centre, and separate developments in their several homes. And Professor Schrader does not seem to allow weight enough to the difference in the circumstances of the Northern and Southern sub-families — the former exposed to many modifying influences, the latter living almost alone, and able to follow their own inherited line of development uncontaminated by foreign elements. Further, as to the Arpakshadites, or more exactly, the Heberites, the biblical account does not necessarily make the Juktanidæ the sole or the original inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula, while it in effect expressly states that the Hebrews or Terachites adopted a foreign dialect ; that is, one already spoken by another people. So the Ishmaelites, no doubt, adopted the language of Arabia, and so the Juktanidæ may have done. We cannot be said to know with exactness what region is pointed to by the name Arpakshad, whether Arrepachites, or Mesopotamia, or some other. Thus the great southern Shemitic tongue may have established itself in Arabia and Africa long before the existence of accurate

historical records, the Juktanidae may have passed southward and adopted it, while the cognate Pelegites went into another region, and assumed quite a different linguistic character.

In so complicated a question it is well to proceed with caution, as, indeed, Professor Schrader, in the beginning of his Article, calls his investigation a tentative one. The attempt he makes to settle the question is able and instructive, and will lead, it is to be hoped, to further investigation.

ARTICLE VIII.

PARTHIA THE RIVAL OF ROME.

BY REV. SELAH MERRILL, ANDOVER, MASS.

1. *Parthia as Connected with Judea.*

THE words, Parthia and Parthian, convey, even to the general reader of history, no very definite meaning. Parthia is thought of as some inaccessible mountain region of Western or Central Asia, and the Parthians as a wild, fierce tribe which inhabited the same. Can anything definite be known in regard to this country and people? The race—its origin, history, strength, civilization, and decay; the country—its geographical position, its physical features, and its resources; the empire in its rise and fall,—to fix and appreciate the place of this country and people, in the world-history; such topics, if it is possible for light to be shed upon them, ought to command our attention.

The subject before us, aside from its interest for the general student of history, is of special importance for those who propose to investigate thoroughly the history of New Testament times. The generations to which Christ and Herod the Great respectively belonged, had vivid impressions of this, to us, strange, half-mythical race. They had seen their swarms of mounted warriors. They knew something of their terrible power. In the year 40 B.C. the Parthians had literally driven the Romans from Asia. Their hordes, chiefly mounted men, had swept over Syria like a cloud of locusts. Their army pushed southward, a part of it, under Pacorus, proceeding along the coast to Ptolemais and Mount Carmel, and the rest, under Barzaphernes, went down inland through Galilee. Jerusalem was taken and plundered, with the country lying about it.¹ They settled Jewish politics in the most summary way. They placed Antigonus upon the throne of Judea. This prince, the last of the Asmonean princes, held the capital for three years, B.C. 40-37, "as a Parthian satrap, the creature and dependent of the great monarchy on the further side of the

¹ Josephus, Ant. 14. 13. 9.